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of
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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

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CONTENTS

BARTER. A Complete Novel	Louise Elizabeth Dutton	1
DAPHNE	Charles S. Gerlach	43
THIS LIFE WE LEAD	Lewis Allen Browne	44
A CURE FOR A HEADACHE	Alice Cowdery	45
DUST, SNOW AND WIND	Archibald Sullivan	49
TRAVEL A LA MODE	Howard V. Sutherland	50
I HAVE PIPED AND YE DID NOT DANCE	Herbert Kaufman	51
MODERN DEFINITIONS	Sam S. Stinson	52
THE PAINTED WORLD	Jacques Futrelle	53
THE PICCOLO MAN	Arthur Henry Gooden	65
SUNSET	Marion Dorothea Shainwald	70
THE SUBTERFUGES OF THE SOLITARY	Martha G. D. Bianchi	71
LOVER'S NIGHT SONG	Louis How	80
BACHELORETTES. Essay	W. B. Kerr	81
FRENZY	Ruth Comfort Mitchell	84
FOR THREE CAMELS	Achmed Abdullah	85
A PICTURE	Lizette Woodworth Reese	87
FROM THE JOURNAL OF MADAME LÉANDRE	Helen Woljeska	88
THE LAND OF YESTERDAY	Thomas Walsh	88
LIONS	Ethel Watts Mumford	89
THE FACE OF LOVE	Mary Grosvenor	95
TORTURE	Marie Beaumarscheff	96
CHICAGO, A CITY WITH INSTINCTS	Constance Skinner	97
STRAY SHOTS	Harold Susman	102
ON THE TOP OF THE WORLD	Jane W. Guthrie	103
THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE	Nancy Byrd Turner	108
COWARDS	Kate Masterson	109
ANEMONE	Pierre Vivante	112
IN THE RUE VIEUX ANGE	Paul Scott Mowrer	113
MATUTINAL MUSINGS	Tom P. Morgan	118
STERRETT'S AFFINITY	Gordon Johnstone	119
THE OLD SHIP MAST	Louise Driscoll	122
THE BLAZE ON THE MOUNTAIN	Elliott Flower	123
JOY BRINGERS	Aldis Dunbar	130
THE STARS AND EVE	Howard Markle Hoke	131
THE MARRIAGE LEASE. A Play in One Act	Hobart Lee	133
BOREDOM	Harry Kemp	141
NO SONG OF MINE	W. Osborne	142
L' EX-VOTO. In the Original French	Henri de Régnier	143
ALL WORK AND—NO PLAY	George Jean Nathan	145
A VISIT TO A SHORT STORY FACTORY	H. L. Mencken	151
SOMETHING PERSONAL	John Adams Thayer	159

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$3.00

SINGLE COPIES 25 CENTS

Entered at New York Post Office as second class mail matter

Issued monthly by John Adams Thayer Corporation

JOHN ADAMS THAYER, President

452 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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Poem by HERBERT KAUFMAN

THE SMART SET

*Its Prime Purpose is to Provide Lively Entertainment
For Minds That Are Not Primitive*

BARTER

By Louise Elizabeth Dutton

A BLOND young man was whistling the march from "Aida," and knocking at Nancy Farren's door.

Nancy lived on the fifth floor of the Pension Stella.

"Why?" had asked her aunt from Pittsburgh, over the beer which, as a conscientious tourist content to sacrifice her digestion for the sake of conforming to the local customs of Munich, she was sipping from the biggest and most forbidding stein in the Café Maximilian, relentlessly gripped between two plump, white-gloved hands. Without affectation Nancy had replied:

"Because there is no sixth floor."

Nancy intended poverty to be only a temporary inconvenience, and so she was not ashamed of it. She was frankly amused by her world, the student under-world of Munich, and the girls who go without white gloves to buy music scores, who darn their lingerie and invent and practise kindred artifices of economy which deceive nobody, all for the sake of their poor little voices that die so quickly and poor little hopes that die before the voice is dead.

Nancy darned her lingerie on evenings when she had nothing better to do—and always provided that the holes were not too big. She had fallen into a neigh-

borly habit of breakfasting with the pretty English girl who occupied the first floor suite at the Pension Stella. The thin-cheeked, deep-eyed Polish girl on the second floor, who paid half her rent with piano lessons to Frau Steinmann's children and went into debt for the other half, was encouraged to borrow an occasional mark from Nancy, for the Polish girl had a future, as Nancy's business sense forewarned her. Nancy was closer akin to the first Adam Farren, her grandfather, who had founded the Farren fortune, than to her father, who had lost it. At the card table and elsewhere the first Adam Farren had played cautious poker; neither the Polish girl nor the English girl nor the half-dozen others who were privileged to impart their uneventful life histories to Adam Farren's granddaughter had ever heard of Duane Elliot from Nancy.

"Heart's well beloved," called the blond young man, and he opened the door, which creaked on its hinges and was painted all over a thick, uneven coat of vivid blue.

Nancy's room was small and bare. It was half past three of an afternoon in February. By the sharp, slanting light the prettiest of rooms would have looked unfriendly; and Nancy's did not pretend to be a pretty room. There were no

curtains, but because Nancy liked to sleep late in the morning, a shade of an expensive quality, and of a green in defiance of nature, tempered the glare of the sun. The piano faced the window in a good light. The toilet table stood at the left of the window in a better light. The couch was heaped with pillows of unrelated shapes and sizes. On the blue-papered walls, without a hanging or picture to cloak them, pink cabbage roses bloomed at geometrical intervals, naked and unashamed.

"Alas," cheerfully exclaimed the blond young man, "the roses! They are, as always, of a ferocity to bite!"

He had ingenuous eyes, the blond young man, large and brown, softening and narrowing perceptibly when he was amused, which was often, or touched, and this was oftener still. His hair was long for an American boy, but short for a German boy with musical pretensions, and his corduroy house coat toned effectively with his hair. Altogether an attractive young man, and a useful young man; for without missing a bar of the composition he was rendering—it was "Celeste Aida" now—and without haste or hesitation, like a skilled domestic, he had pushed a kimono of quilted silk, dull yellow, out of sight between the calico wardrobe curtains, extracted a rouge rag from a pile of music on the piano and tucked it behind a photograph on the toilet table—a man's photograph, at which he scowled darkly in passing. A scarf of gold tissue crumpled among the couch cushions was pulled into shape and flung trailing across the arm of a chair. The ugly little room was restful and inviting, and upon a table from which he had previously removed a red Turkish slipper, a bottle of milk and an odd paper-covered volume of De Maupassant, the blond young man was making tea.

The tea service was edged with a chasing of twining rosebuds, that is the hallmark of a certain shop in Bond Street. Since leaving that shop it had obviously not been cleaned. But the cups were of crockery, thick, with a blue glaze and a gilt line round the top—cups of the sort you can obtain at the shop on

the street floor which robs the Pension Stella above unmistakably of claims to aristocracy. There, indeed, the young man himself had bought Nancy's cups; that was why, perhaps, he dusted them with reminiscent tenderness, and measured the sugar, one teaspoonful in the nicked cup, two teaspoonfuls in the cup without a handle, deliberately, as one performing a sacred rite. Then he produced a worn pouch which smelled of good tobacco, and rolled two cigarettes of a firmness and regularity of contour so faultless that nobody would have ventured to smoke them except a self-seeking and pampered young woman who elected to drink tea when the law of the land was coffee; and then he leaned back in the less comfortable of the two uncomfortable chairs with his cheek against the yellow scarf and waited, his eyes on the flickering flame of the alcohol lamp, narrowed perceptibly, and as soft as excessively sentimental eyes could be, eyes lit with emotion too fresh and uncontrolled for even "Celeste Aida" to express, until the blue-painted door was thrown open and Nancy came in.

Nancy Farren was not a beautiful young woman. Nancy knew this, and saw to it that other people did not. Framed now in the preposterous blue doorway, the blond young man saw a lady all light and color and laughter, graciously clothed in ample draperies; over their clinging brown folds, over her hair, that showed tumbled and glowing under a close-fitted turban of fur, and in her red-brown eyes, atilt at the corners, little gold flashes of blending, changing color shifted and danced and played. She was a woman, with the finished lure of a woman. She was a girl, unconsciously and irresistibly provocative, careless and strong and young. She was the answer to the prayer of the hungry dreams of youth, an answer at once greater and less than the dreams. In plain English, which is not the language of lovelorn young men in England or elsewhere, she was Nancy Farren, in her last year's velvet street suit, with the sleeves cut smaller after the prevailing mode—Nancy Farren, who knew

that elastic corsets reduce the waistline and that pastel brown is becoming to girls with red hair.

"Fritz, you are a little dear," she said pleasantly, just as she would have said it if the young man who had slipped the gloves from the hands she held out to him, and one after the other lightly kissed the palms of her hands, had offered to throw his highly sensitized young body over the edge of a precipice in token of his evident devotion, instead of making tea. Nancy preferred the tea, because she was cold and tired and angry with Otto Gerber, who had called her—literally translated—a forever-to-be-unpardonned-of-heaven American fool.

Gerber's vocabulary was famous. It had lost him pupils. Since her first and last experience of corporal punishment, when she had bitten her father's finger to the bone, nothing had angered Nancy like Gerber's criticisms, every extravagant, calculated word of them, and every word she deserved, as she admitted to herself, if not to Gerber.

Nancy flicked an incongruous dash of cigarette ash into the respectable blue saucer of her empty cup. Cigarettes were bad for her voice and strictly prohibited. Tomorrow Gerber would find her out and swear at her.

"When I am a prima donna," the girl reflected, "on my first night, for luck, I mean to send for Gerber, just to hear him swear."

Out of the heart of the smoke rings which she was blowing—an accomplishment mastered under the instruction of Fritz to divert him from making love to her—rings of smoke white like Gerber's hair and his clear cut face, Gerber's eyes seemed to look close into hers as she had seen them last, the chill dead blue of them an instant alive with a mocking, caressing light at once strange and unaccountably familiar to her.

Presently she must clean her gloves and mend her one pair of silk stockings and bathe herself in the collapsible rubber tub which was hidden now behind the edge of the couch cover; she must shake orris root into her heavy hair; she must rub herself with alcohol because she was tired and the street had been

damp, and she could not afford to take cold. All the daily routine of elaborate grooming, of which she hated the labor, though the result was pleasant and necessary to her, that must be gone through with presently. But for the moment she was without responsibility in a woman's world all peace and warm odors and softness and mocking, caressing eyes. She nestled her body close into the yielding pillows.

"Fritz, if I were a cat, I could purr," she said.

The blond young man, who for the five weeks that he had been her neighbor on the top floor at the Pension Stella had been played with and teased quite as scientifically as if she were really a cat and he were a mouse, and who was tired of it, dropped on his knees beside Nancy and caught her hand, which she was much too comfortable to make the effort of taking away. He rubbed his cheek against the curve of her palm and looked up at her, ashamed and hungry, like a child who has stolen jam and expects to be punished for it, though he would infinitely prefer to be given more jam.

"Little flower of the world! Heart's one beloved!" he whispered.

"You are a silly child, dear," said Nancy amiably, and she threw away her cigarette and pressed the boy's head closer against her knee and buried her hand in his hair, a strong white hand, with shapely, prominent knuckles, the pianist's hand, not the woman's hand, too strong to be gentle for long, though it played now gently enough with his soft, fair hair. With a little sigh, the boy relaxed against her knee.

"A silly boy," said Nancy, "and a nice boy, but I do not love you, dear, and you do not love me."

Nancy leaned forward and touched his forehead with cool lips.

"Some day," she said, "you will be first violin in an orchestra, and married to a German *hausfrau* with cheeks like apples, who will adore you. And I shall sing leading soprano roles, and you will look up at me then across the footlights, and you will say: 'How fat she is! And she has forgotten me!' But you will go

on playing first violin for ten years after I have grown too fat to act and have married my richest lover. For art is eternal, but good looks are not, Fritz; and it is not because I can sing that I shall make a success."

The boy struck her hands away and stood up, and scowled down at her.

"You sing," he said, "as you play, like a phonograph, a wornout phonograph, with the expression stops out of order. And your hair is indecent. Nice girls don't have hair like yours, and they don't have nails with a high polish like yours."

Nancy laughed good-naturedly, the empty laugh of the woman who has never cried.

"I sing and I play," she said, "without distinction. But I am going to have everything I want in the world."

Then, because she was sorry for him, luxuriously, sentimentally sorry, as a girl can afford to be after she has had her way with a man, and because she had the born coquette's instinct for the moment when a man, even the least of her creatures, is slipping away from her into the mental regions beyond her grasp, she held up her arms to Fritz with the prettiest of gestures, half acquired grace, half inborn, womanly charm.

"Poor little boy!" she said.

But Fritz looked past her, out of the shabby little room, to the shabby little view from its window, a straggly tree-branch and a patch of darkening sky. It was almost night. The tea hour was over.

"You are very pretty," he said, "and very clever, and there is more knowledge and danger in one finger of your hand than the ungrudged heart of another woman. But, after all, you are only a woman, heart's dear beloved, one more little fool of a woman, who tries to get what she wants, and who will not pay for it. My love, another man's love, success, and laughter, whatever you want—I do not know—you take from the world; you take, and you give nothing. But you cannot cheat the

world forever, even you. Some day you must pay for everything you have taken. You must give much, because you have taken much. You are very strong and you are very clever, but life is stronger. Some day you'll have to pay."

Now it had grown so dark that the cabbage roses had blurred and faded out of sight on the walls. By twilight the little room looked bare no longer, but empty and restful. The boy could see Nancy's face, white against the dark mass of pillows, but he could not see her eyes. If there had been tears in her eyes, he could not have seen them, but Fritz had a secret conviction that Nancy could not cry. She was smiling now, he thought, that faint, crooked smile of hers, the only look that touched her face with age.

"Give me another cigarette," said Nancy.

There was a bumping thud of steps on the stairs. Katrine was bringing Nancy's bath water. Fritz Kessler, music student and prophet, slammed the blue door open. In the red-carpeted hall an ill smelling lamp was burning. Because prophets, in their own country and out of it, have been without honor so long that they have ceased to expect it, Fritz did not know that the water in Katrine's pail grew cold before Nancy's lamp was lit. And because even in thought he respected her privacy, an attitude of mind which is equally creditable whether the woman in the case deserves it or not, Fritz did not suspect that four hours later Nancy Farren, a young woman by nature unimaginative, full fed with the fare of the Pension Stella, which is sufficient but stolid and not conducive to mental flights, stood huddled in her yellow kimono neglecting that article of her unique but scrupulously rigid rule of conduct which called for ten hours of sleep out of twenty-four, not to admire the face in the mirror, pink from massage and framed in two thick bronze braids, but to stare straight into the eyes of Duane Elliot's picture, until the close set mouth seemed to be saying:

"You've got to pay. Some day you've got to pay."

II

"SANO," Duane Elliot said, "there is nothing new under the sun. And, more shame to us, we do not want anything new. Do you know a man with the strength of mind to put down his morning paper when he has finished the headlines—or go sensibly home to bed after the crucial act of a show, instead of sitting through all the denatured passion and desiccated epigram the playwright hands out, for the sake of witnessing a foreordained and predestined clinch with his own eyes? Do you know what is the ruling passion of the human race, Sano? The passion for saying, 'I told you so.'"

Duane's little Jap finished gathering up Duane's breakfast things without showing any interest in the soliloquy which had been nominally addressed to him.

Duane was sitting at a window of his rooms at the rear of the Bayrischer Hof, staring fixedly if unappreciatively at the frieze of the Siege of Troy on the house across the street, talking to himself and thinking not about what he said but about a letter in his hand.

It was an important letter, and it was short, like most important letters, although Duane had devoted an uninterrupted half-hour to its composition; one line only:

Will be with you at four.

It was addressed to Miss Nancy Farren, in care of Frau Steinmann, at the Pension Stella.

"Providence and the weather permitting," was a phrase which might have been invented for Duane's benefit. Lesser agencies seldom tried to interfere with Duane. Providence and the weather, when they tried it, did not always succeed. Duane was a methodical young man. He left nothing to chance. It was not a chance call he meant to make upon Nancy Farren. He knew his reasons for going, if he had not mentioned them in his conventional and apparently casual note. He knew how large a cheque for two thousand dollars looks to a young woman who has been

glad of the chance to accept an occasional and precarious twenty-five for singing second rate songs in an untrained voice to women her mother, if she had permitted herself the indiscretion of meeting them socially, would not afterward have taken the trouble to cut. And subjected to the drain of the ill regulated expenditure of a girl who has been rich long enough to acquire expensive tastes and poor not long enough to learn economy, Duane knew almost to a fraction of dimes and pennies and minutes and hours how long two thousand dollars will last.

Duane knew besides that Otto Gerber's training must either make or break a voice. Nancy's voice was soprano, of high range and pleasant quality, retained in spite of overuse and false tone production; a voice to make a mediocre success in concert work, backed by the appeal of a pretty woman's personality, but a voice that Gerber would crush out of existence, because he had no charity for mediocrity.

Duane did not believe that Nancy could succeed in grand opera, although he had begun to promise her an operatic career the night he saw her first.

Duane, attending his sister's musicale under protest an hour late, had found Nancy there. She was quite by herself, on an ill devised Moorish divan. She was pale, and she had rouged for the first time in her life, with liquid rouge, applied in tentative, conspicuous dabs of color. She looked shabby and ill, but she had the grand air. By the help of it, she conveyed by her manner that she preferred to be ignored, and to be clothed in a rusty black gown which any other woman in the room would have been ashamed to give to her maid.

Even then Duane found it hard not to make love to Nancy, and with every afternoon in her dingy studio in Waverly Place, crowded with stray bits of the Farren mahogany bought in by well meaning friends at the receiver's sale, with every *gauche* rudeness or deliberate snub of the women at whose houses he got engagements for her, every day of the dragging New York winter when he made slow progress toward winning her

confidence, it had been increasingly hard not to make love to Nancy.

For the times he might have taken her in his arms to comfort her unrebuked, for the added line that might have turned his notes into love letters, for the year he had allowed her to feel her power over him and never hinted that she might have to pay for it, for Nancy's year of grace he was thankful, now that it was over.

Duane liked Nancy for her brains and her breeding and her deliberate, calculated recklessness, sincerely, as he liked men, as he had never liked any woman but Nancy, and as he had not believed it possible to like any woman when he allowed himself to fall in love stage by stage, appreciating the flavor of each like the epicure he was, with the amiable lady who was his wife.

Because he liked the girl, and because it was a sunny morning with a tang of spring in the air, and because even a practical and efficient business man may be guilty of sentiment upon spring mornings in Munich, Duane was sorry for Nancy Farren. He was sorry, but he felt no temptation to tear up his cheque of two thousand dollars made out to Nancy, canceled and endorsed in the careless, angular hand that was feminine, like everything about her, as a thoroughly high-minded young man would have done.

Duane was not a thoroughly high-minded young man; he had voiced his philosophy of life in embryo when, having eaten ten bananas at one sitting, he had replied to his exasperated mother, between doses of calomel demanding why: "Because I wanted them."

He was a young man of average morals and more than average good looks. He had the square-shouldered, wiry build of the athlete, contradicted by the evenly spread high color of the man who has lived well, too well perhaps; but his gray eyes were clear and keen, and he looked like a typical English young man, or a typical American young man, which ever you prefer as a model of adequate tubbing and grooming and tailoring, as he stepped out of the main entrance of the Bayrischer Hof, ready to go for a walk in

the Englischer Garten, now that he had dispatched the note by messenger to Nancy and had until four o'clock nothing better to do in a city where, except for the one thing which for the time he wanted more than anything else, there was nothing he wanted at all.

Duane did not like Munich. It put him uneasily on the defensive, like a small boy at a performance of "Peter Pan," who is interrupted in his congenial occupation of straining his eyes to see the wires that enable the leading lady to fly by an unreasonable request to believe in fairies. Duane did not believe in fairies. He was a Philistine and proud of it, because it pays to be a Philistine. But Munich is not for Philistines. Duane looked at the trim rectangles of grass at his left, with Gluck and Max Emanuel and the rest enshrined at regular intervals on neat white pedestals, and admitted to himself, as honest-minded New Yorkers must admit sometimes in all other parts of the globe, that he was homesick for New York.

"Duane!"

He had turned north, along the Promenadeplatz, walking quickly and breathing deep breaths of keen spring air. A step as eager and light as his own had overtaken him. Pink-cheeked, frankly out of breath and laughing, Nancy had fallen into step at his side.

"I ran half a block," she said, "to catch you. I thought they'd arrest me. I'm getting so fat that I don't like to run. Where did you come from? Duane, I am glad to see you."

"Where did you come from yourself, and where are you going?"

Nancy pulled her little brown turban closer over her tumbled hair. Her velvet coat, cut on straight, faultless lines, looked faded and worn in the sunlight. Duane had forgotten how her free step matched his own.

"It's been a long time—"

Duane's voice was trembling.

An officer in an immaculate, comic opera sort of uniform turned as he rode past to stare at Nancy. Would the man stare harder, Duane wondered, if he were to take Nancy in his arms? And

what effect would it have upon Nancy? Whether she liked it or not, it was what he wanted to do.

"Gerber's a brute—a brute, but a clever man. I am ordering a pink gown, pastel; it will not fight my hair. It's a French sort of color scheme. Do you approve of it, Duane?"

The girl was talking. He must listen to her. He could not steady his voice to answer her yet.

"—the aria from 'Samson and Delilah,' '*Réponds à mes tendresses*'—you know how it goes?"

Her color was clear, a healthy, natural pink, heightened by rapid walking. At least he had not starved her; she looked strong and well. To emphasize the tilt of her eye at the corner, she had lengthened the line of the eyebrow a shade with some delicate pencil, so carefully that only Duane would have detected it.

"Duane, you are going to be proud of me."

At the end of the Promenadeplatz a heavy red motor car lurched forward and barred their way. With the instinct to check and steady herself, Nancy put a hand on his arm. Through a rent in her glove a finger tip showed, warm pink.

"Nancy," Duane said, "are you glad? Are you glad to see me?"

"Yes."

The red-brown eyes looked square into his. Nancy was almost as tall as he was. The hand in the worn glove did not tremble under the hand Duane laid upon it.

"I wonder?"

Duane Elliot, walking soberly enough beside the shabby young woman whose pace matched his own, had encountered something that was new to him, something at once defiant and alluring; the reckless, unrelenting light of battle had flashed him a sudden challenge from Nancy's eyes.

III

OTTO GERBER sat all alone in his studio, playing to himself.

The little man had the massive, shapeless head of a person of sturdier build.

On the piano bench he looked like a tall man. He had a profile like Beethoven's, the heavy forehead and calm lips, and, just now, the inspired, serene eyes. He was playing a gipsy dance.

The young Russian girl who had composed the dance had killed herself the week after she had completed the suite of gipsy melodies. She had been Gerber's pupil, and she had dedicated the suite to him. She left a heartbroken scrawl of a letter of farewell to him. It cost Gerber's managers a good deal of money to keep the letter out of the papers, more money than they enjoyed risking for a man on the eve of his first concert tour; but they suppressed the letter, and kept secret the attempt of the girl's brother to stab him in his dressing room the evening of his first appearance in Dresden, so successful an appearance that it is musical history now.

In the ten years since the suicide all its details had been quite forgotten; or, if anybody remembered them, it was not Gerber. His mind was far away from the whispering, tinkling tune he played. Just as women plan new hats while they listen to an uninteresting sermon, he had found that he could perfect plans of his own to an accompaniment of his own playing. Gerber played without mannerisms. He sat rigidly still. His thick fingers scarcely moved. The dead girl's plaintive, desperate love music wailed through the big, sunny room like a ghost that had come at no call of his.

The stuffy drawing rooms downstairs were characterless, like the spotless kitchen of Johann, Gerber's little-eyed, pink-cheeked Bavarian servant. But it is a dull stairway indeed that makes no appeal to the imagination. Gerber's narrow plush-carpeted stairs were dark, and they creaked—with the echo of other footsteps? Light, hurried footsteps, always the footsteps of women. On the stairs the quivering call of the gipsy dance echoed faintly, like an after-note of forgotten music, played by forgotten hands, instead of Otto Gerber playing to himself contentedly after a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs.

The stair promised ghosts, and the studio was haunted. The room looked

expurgated, it was so noncommittal, so exquisitely ordered, so unnaturally bare for a living room and workroom. There was not a book or a picture in sight. The cushioned chairs did not suggest comfort; they emphasized the emptiness of the room. Dun-colored curtains screened the three high windows, but their gaunt folds lent the place no grace of drapery. The neutral-tinted rug on the floor was there because the acoustics of the room required it. The music on the piano was all Nancy's. Before the arrival of Paula Wissner, who shared Gerber's morning with Nancy, all of Nancy's music would be put away. It was a room with a past, like a woman with a past, afraid to give an account of itself. Life went on there and left no trace.

But if the room was haunted, no ghosts were showing themselves to Nancy.

She stood, pulling off her gloves, without trying to hide the fact that they were twelve-inch gloves, and left bare an inch or two of firm-fleshed arm below the rolled-back cuff of her negligée blouse. She had slipped into the room five minutes late for her lesson, because Fritz had cornered her outside her own door to beg for the rose in her belt. What would Gerber do, she wondered, now? Scold her for being late? Go on playing through half her lesson hour, deep in some theme from his opera, which he believed was to make himself and Nancy famous? He did neither.

The dance swept on to its climax, a crescendo of crashing chords, of question and protest and revolt. The air trembled with the question and thrilled with it, and Miss Nancy Farren's alert young brain ached with the challenge of it for quite one minute, which was a long time for Nancy to stop thinking about herself. But the question died away unanswered. One master chord swallowed it up and stilled it, and swept the music out of existence, and the musician with it. On the piano bench an insignificant person with a military, erect back, grotesque to Nancy's American eyes, struck the opening bars of her accompaniment with lifeless precision.

"You are late? That makes nothing," said Gerber sleepily. "Now, *fräulein*."

"You are an unaccountable little man."

Had he seen the tears in her eyes? Nancy hoped not. She dropped her crushed red rose across the piano keys, where Gerber struck it off out of his way just as she had expected him to do and presently planted a square-toed boot upon it; by that time she was struggling with chromatic runs, and did not know nor care.

"You are twenty-five," Gerber said to Nancy in his first talk with her. She had come wearing her one French gown, and a black picture hat that looked French and was not. No woman likes to look all her years when she is wearing her biggest hat. Nancy was just twenty-five. "If you had come to me at sixteen, I could have taught you to sing."

"Now you cannot teach me?"

"Now I can teach you to make your audience think you can sing. You chose this *berceuse* for me to test your voice in, because your lower register is not developed so evenly as your upper register, and this song does not require you to sing many low notes. You chose badly. Show me your weak points, that I may teach you to hide them from others. Show me the worst of you. Never try to cheat me. You are not clever enough. But you *are* clever. Little voices—I send them away. Big voices I keep when I find them. Cleverness I look for and do not find it. Because you are clever, I keep you and make you a voice, *fräulein*."

Today, six months after that promise of Gerber's, Nancy faced the full glare of light from the three high set windows, shabby and unashamed. She was unusually pale. Faint shadows under her eyes set off her pallor like some deliberate trick of make-up. Unbuttoned at the throat, her low-collared blouse fell away in a line that the most exact of dressmakers might try for and miss. Her walking skirt was faded a dingy tobacco brown, and the broadcloth was shiny and white at the seams, but the skirt clung and yielded with the inim-

itable pliable grace of half-worn things. Her eyes looked misty and dream-haunted from lack of sleep. Duane had refused to take her home from their favorite café until he had taught their favorite waiter to make champagne cocktails.

"You slept not more than four hours last night," Gerber observed without interest. His face had a dull-eyed look, like a sleepy snake's. A passionless man, with his mind on his work, a man without a history; like the sunny room, swept and garnished, keeping the secrets of its past, Gerber was ready for Nancy.

"Once more the exercise, and with smoothness. *Ach, Gott*, one must not hang a diamond in a string of matched pearls! Now, without affectation. Forget that you are *Fräulein* Farren. Say to yourself that your name is Schmidt, and that you are ugly. I do not want the woman; I want the voice."

Nancy smiled wearily. Gerber's abuse was tiresome, but she was used to it. She had learned to respond to the stimulus of it. She would have missed it, just as she would have missed the hard action of her piano at the *pension* if a more amenable instrument had been suddenly substituted for it. She repeated her performance.

Gerber himself, though he had methods of his own for acquainting himself with the inner history of his pupils, did not know quite what enemies lay in wait for Nancy when she interposed the frail barrier of the blue-painted door between herself and the rest of the world and began to practise. The sound of the English girl's voice came from below, a big, healthy voice, slightly but perceptibly off key; the sound of a scale, perhaps, faultless and smooth, under the master hand of the Polish girl, an inspired musician, as Nancy knew that she should never be; Fritz, knocking and calling, or tiptoeing away without knocking, a more annoying interruption. Sounds came and went, but the biggest things the girl had to fight were always there arrayed for battle: faulty training that had warped her voice, a spoiled child's desultory and sketchy education, and, though she de-

nied it to herself even when it forced her to put his picture out of sight and escape the keen, possessive eyes of him, an unreasoning, overmastering fear of Duane.

But Adam Farren had carried off the woman whom, in the intervals of more serious undertakings, it had occurred to him to make his wife, the week that her wedding day had been set. She was to have married his oldest friend. He had turned himself into a passable stenographer in three days when he was a clerk with his way to make. The Farrens got what they wanted, and it was Nancy's boast that she was the most concentratedly selfish Farren of them all.

The *étude*, Gerber's pet stumbling block for ambitious mezzos, a tricky little tangle of notes, had lost its terrors for Nancy. Her tones, which had gained clearness without losing their old lightness and poignancy, followed and supplemented each other not unlike what Gerber demanded, matched pearls.

"Now, *fräulein*."

Nancy was not to be asked to repeat the exercise a third time. She was glad. She felt unaccountably tired today.

Gerber struck one chord, enticingly and commandingly, swung round on the bench and settled into an attitude of hunched concentration.

"Do me the favor, forget that thou hast the soul of a cow, my child," he urged in German. With this encouragement, and without accompaniment, Nancy began to sing an aria from "Samson."

It was the aria which she had begun working upon the day Duane came: Delilah's love music, which people who know more about love than music sometimes call the greatest love song in the world.

"Do not listen to thyself. I am here to listen, thou to sing."

Today Nancy was taking this maxim of Gerber's literally, not a safe experiment to make with any advice of Gerber's. As she sang about a man and woman who had loved each other, that man and woman were not so real to her as herself and Duane, who did not love each other at all—Duane, who had been now for two weeks in Munich. As she

sang she could see Duane's bare, black head in the sun on the river, and trace the line of thinning hair at the temples. She could see him holding the spoonful of blazing cognac poised at the rim of her demi-tasse, with his slim, strong fingers.

"Réponds à mes tendresses—"

The music throbbed with the low-voiced, irresistible urge of passion, but Nancy's eyes were clouded and dreamy, even while her whole body vibrated and warmed to the music and her white, veined throat thrilled with the final appeal:

*"Réponds à mes tendresses.
Samson, Samson, je t'aime."*

"Himmel! Art thou a cow or a woman?" demanded Gerber. "The music is alive, and thou, thou art dead, *fräulein!*"

But this time his protest was perfunctory. The newly gained color and depth of her voice had showed magnificently in the aria, as Gerber and Nancy both knew.

"Be nice to me now for five minutes, little man."

Gerber's low chairs, so he had openly explained to Nancy, were chosen to make him look tall. They were not becoming to Nancy's height. She swung herself up to her favorite seat in the corner of the uncushioned window bench. There was a flicker of light in Gerber's half-shut eyes as he watched her, as if he had grown to take some pleasure in looking up at her there, with her trim boots dangling clear of the floor—Nancy knew that it is a necessity, not a luxury, to have your boots made to order, if you wear six double A—and her brown jacket knotted under her chin by the sleeves, boy fashion.

"Fräulein Wissner has the temperament for that aria. You will never have it. You have the soul of a cow."

"You know all about the Wissner's soul?"

Gerber's face became an expressionless mask. It was common gossip in the studios that Paula Wissner was in love with Gerber. In love with the ill-natured little man who sat beating a teas-

ing, intermittent tattoo on the piano bench and scowling up at her.

"Gerber, how ugly you are!" said Nancy. He was never angry when Nancy was rude to him. Sometimes his indifference piqued her, and she set little traps to trick him into being angry. But today the thought of a superior intelligence was restful to her. She would have liked to go and drop on her knees beside the piano bench and hide her face in Gerber's big hands, and permit herself a fit of crying, and sob out:

"What am I going to do? Help me! I've got all the cards in my hand, but I've lost my nerve and I can't play them. Tell me how I am to get rid of Duane!"

Would the thick fingers that beat the devil's tattoo so delicately feel heavy or light if he put his hand on her hair?

"Temperament," said Nancy. "You want me to let someone make love to me before I try to sing love songs?"

She had plunged into a favorite subject of Gerber's.

"Because it seems to me such utter rot," pursued Nancy, "to say that a woman has got to make a fool of herself about a man before she can make a success in opera. Take Calvini. At forty she creates star roles in the Debussy pieces, and the *Criterion* last month called her the greatest living soprano. At twenty she belonged to Prince Flavio, and I don't know how many other affairs she has had; and if I did know, it wouldn't be proper for me to mention them to you. But that woman is not a great soprano because she has made a mess of her relations with men; she is great in spite of it. She lost her head and broke her life to pieces, and then she made it over again into a successful life. But just because other women have lost their heads over men and developed into successful artists, are you going to tell me that I can't do one without the other? Are you, little man?"

"Experience of life is necessary to the correct interpretation of life through art," observed Gerber, his eyes intent upon the polished toe of Nancy's left boot.

"Where have I heard those words be-

fore?" said Nancy flippantly. But she did not feel flippant. She felt tired and lonely, with the dreary loneliness of a child who has been naughty and who has no one who loves it sufficiently to punish it. For some reason, the old subject of debate between herself and Gerber seemed suddenly new to her, vitally new. She had a sense of great issues at stake. What Gerber meant to say next had become a momentous question to her, as she sat and swung her feet in the sun.

"What a child thou art!" Nancy could not see his face. Gerber had turned to the keys. He was beating a grotesque, inhuman rhythm out of the piano, the gipsy dance, transposed into a higher key, executed with syncopated time. He broke off his performance with one big discord that caricatured and marred it, and came deliberately across the room to Nancy.

He stood close beside her. His broad, low forehead showed unlined in the keen light. With the sunbeams making a wavering play of shadow and light across it, there was no suggestion of age about his silvery hair.

"Love." Mockery and ennui were gone from his voice now. He spoke like an inspired prophet of love—love, the priceless, ungrudged gift, the secret treasure of woman.

"Thou little child!"

He caught the girl's bewildered face between his hands. Light fingers brushed the unspoiled curve of the cheeks and lingered an instant, the faintest touch, the parody of a caress.

"Thou art talking of love, and thou hast no room for it, no hope of love, in thy small and shallow heart.

"Stand up. Do not be ashamed of that big body which God gave you. Stand up, and remember that you are Delilah," Gerber was shouting presently, no longer a philosopher, but an undersized, overexcited music master, waving his arms with extravagant gestures at Nancy.

They gave the rest of the hour to the "Samson" aria. Duane Elliot counted five repetitions of it as he sat downstairs in a plush-covered chair beside the white parlor stove reading the *Fliegende*

Blätter with an unsmiling face and waiting to walk home with Nancy.

IV

"ZWIEBACK or coffee cake?" said Miss Ogelthorpe.

"Both," said Nancy, investigating the provision shelf of Miss Ogelthorpe's massive, claw-footed secretary, a piece of furniture which its owner did not appreciate and Nancy did, "and honey and strawberry jam. Alice, do you think that good young girls keep Kümmel and Doctorberger and Bénédicte all in the house at the same time? Here is pot cheese for me, and a box of marrons for the Infant. Here are five stuffed olives to go in the egg mess, dear."

Nancy was to take a second breakfast with Duane, at the Bayrischer Hof. She was not hungry now, but she guessed that Nadine was.

Nancy was not a motherly young woman, but it was fascinating, like riding a tricky horse, or insinuating yourself gradually into the confidence of an Airedale, to mother Nadine Marinoff, with her shy, caressing ways and grave, unchildlike eyes. The child was only seventeen, though she had told Fritz that she was twenty-two and Alice Ogelthorpe that she had forgotten her age. She could get Miss Ogelthorpe into her tight-belted, high-boned gowns without losing her temper. She could cure Nancy's headaches like a trained masseuse. She could concoct strange-flavored chafing dish compounds so savory that they tempted even Miss Ogelthorpe's conservative palate when she chose, but today she did not choose.

She sat cross-legged, nestling against a big pile of couch cushions. Her thin-limbed body was amply draped in a quilted robe of crimson satin, a splendid garment still, in spite of the stains on the biggest dragon's tarnished gilt tail—faint, unmistakable marks of rouge. There was no rouge on Nadine's thin cheeks today. They showed clear white against the black of her hair. The thick, sleek braids reached to her knees as she sat, a barbaric, incongruous little

figure, on the delicately patterned chintz of Miss Ogelthorpe's couch.

Miss Ogelthorpe's immaculately appointed breakfast table might have been transported bodily out of some sunny English breakfast room. Everything shone that could possibly be made to shine: the glossy damask of the cloth, the silver jugs and spoons, marked with the Ogelthorpe crest, the iridescent vase in the exact center of the table, full of daffodils, tightly bunched and uncompromisingly straight.

A burnished copper chafing dish spluttered and flared in front of Miss Ogelthorpe. Torn, cobwebby white lace showed between the fluttering folds of Nancy's crocus yellow kimono, and the white, low-arched feet in the Japanese sandals were stockingless—she had allowed herself one more nap after Nadine tapped at her door. But Miss Ogelthorpe's room looked like a conventional breakfast room.

"The Infant is homesick, or in love." Miss Ogelthorpe, looking very large and clean in a freshly tubbed negligée of dotted Swiss, was apportioning the egg mess with mathematical accuracy upon the ugly, expensive Limoges plates of her breakfast service.

"I have never been in love since they would not let me run away with my uncle's butler. I was fifteen then. He had the most beautiful teeth," said Nadine, putting three lumps of sugar into her little cup of black coffee. "But I suppose I am always homesick on Sundays."

"Beautiful teeth! I fell in love with my mathematics professor at school because he had twenty-nine neckties," said Nancy.

"Who counted them?" asked Miss Ogelthorpe unkindly. "Teddy," she added, "was the only first love I ever had."

Teddy was Miss Ogelthorpe's brother, a high-shouldered, black-haired man, with no trace of resemblance to her blonde prettiness about his keen face, an excellent foil to her, as one's favorite brother is likely to be. Duane and Nancy, strolling out beyond the Eng-lischer Garten the day before, had come

face to face with the two, and Nancy had exchanged a word or two with the big, shy man, who had never more than a word for stray music students who interrupted his hours with his sister on his visits to Munich that were so frequent and so brief.

Nancy would have borrowed her brother's allowance and broken up his love affairs, if she had had a brother—she knew that. Nancy's recollections of home Sundays ranged from lonely days in a hall bedroom to the remoter week ends at Farrenville, when Adam Farren kept open house there in his pretty wife's feverishly gay lifetime; and laughing and far-away talk, all sound and no words, mingled so with Nancy's dreams that she could not tell where the talk ended and the dreams began. Not one of Adam Farren's guests used to look up from the card tables at the sleepy-eyed child with her red hair twisted tight into one ungainly pigtail, who crept down from her lonely nursery to peep at them sometimes through the smoking room door.

Her friends knew curiously little about Nadine's home life; her chatter was all of more lurid subjects. But Sunday must mean country lanes and church bells and bowing villagers and everything pictorial and English to Miss Ogelthorpe, so Nancy thought. She felt suddenly jealous of the tranquil and healthy creature, mixing her *café au lait* in the approved fashion, pouring a double stream from milk pot and coffee pot at once, one grasped in each big-knuckled hand.

"Alice, you've got the pinkest cheeks I ever saw. What complexion dope do you use?" said Nancy.

"Milk," said Miss Ogelthorpe—"fresh milk. Dab it on the last thing at night with absorbent cotton, and let it dry in."

"Your Fritz has good teeth"—Nadine was sticking to her subject—"the even, blue-white kind. Oh, I saw a girl with him last night at the Maximilian—German, tiny waist, tight stays. She drank out of his stein."

"She has my blessing. I'm tired of men," said Nancy.

Duane preferred a funny little rathskeller on a side street, his own discovery, to the Maximilian, so Nancy had not met the siren with the tight stays. But at one the night before she had been urging sisterly counsel upon Fritz, determined to shoot himself at her feet with an antiquated cavalry pistol of his. This she did not tell Nadine. Nancy had her own code of honor, and so had Nadine. Nadine made fun of Fritz, but she asked no questions about Duane Elliot.

"Tired of men? All women are tired of men. We are born tired of men. In order to hold them, it is necessary to be tired of them. When we are no longer indifferent, we lose them," said Nadine.

"Exactly. But you can't have any more coffee, child. You were playing Chopin at midnight. Nice little girls go to bed at ten and dream of the fairy prince," said Nancy.

"Where is he? Anyway, I don't want him, and I don't want a cigarette," said Nadine sulkily.

Miss Ogelthorpe chose a monogrammed cigarette from the gunmetal case Nadine had pushed away, and inserted it neatly in her mother of pearl mouthpiece.

"Nancy, what is that nasty mess for?" she said.

"For a red-breasted bird, with hungry eyes." Nancy held out a bit of zwieback, spread with cheese and honey, to Nadine, who opened her mouth to be fed, after dropping a tiny, forgiving kiss on the wrist of the hand that fed her.

"I love you," she said. "What hard, cool hands—like linen sheets on a winter night! My own great-grandmother spun some of our sheets at home. I look like her. I am homesick on Sundays. Last Sunday I went to church. Paula Wissner was there. She cried. Sometimes she goes by herself on days when there is no service, and sits in the empty church and cries."

"How do you know she cries?" said Miss Ogelthorpe.

"When she comes out her nose is red," explained Nadine simply. "Gerber can have any woman he wants, they say."

"Gerber does not want Paula Wissner," said Nancy.

"But there is only one way for a thing like that to end," said Miss Ogelthorpe.

"There is only one way for anything in your life to end," said Nancy sharply—"the way you want it to end. It's up to you."

"But if you were Paula Wissner?"

"I would not wear the one shade of red that made my face look yellow, and I would not pin my hair at the one angle which added an inch to the length of my nose. Her nose is long enough as God made it. She is ugly—almost as ugly as Gerber."

Nancy got up and began to scrape and pile the breakfast dishes. In Miss Ogelthorpe's well ordered rooms it was a perfectly natural proceeding, even for Nancy. It would not have seemed strange for a trimly uniformed maid to appear out of Miss Ogelthorpe's past, and take the dishes away to the butler's pantry, and wash them hastily to avoid being late to church.

"Paula Wissner's mother was a contralto—did you know?" said Nadine. "At the Royal Opera in Vienna."

Nadine was warmed and fed and ready to talk scandal now. She remembered gossip that everyone else had forgotten, and catalogued it and pigeon-holed it, waiting to bring it out in due time with uncanny promptness to answer questions, spoken or unspoken. She had not a prying mind, but the woes of the world lay heavily upon her heart, which, so far as Nancy knew, had no private griefs of its own. When the story-telling mood was upon her, the child could have gripped the hearts of her audience by merely rehearsing the plot of a Jane Austen novel.

"She has more temperament in her little finger than I have in my whole hard-working body," Nancy had confessed to Duane. "Gerber calls me a cow, but Nadine makes me feel like one. Maybe I ought to give up opera and take to oratorio."

Today, as usual, Miss Ogelthorpe was submitting reluctantly but inevitably to the pathos of Nadine's vibrating voice and pleading eyes. Nancy had no time

to yield to their spell today. Duane had given a new street dress of beige cloth an especial invitation to breakfast with him, and that meant its owner must spend half an hour at least on her toilet, without counting the time she would stand in front of her mirror wondering if it looked like a secondhand gown.

"To be all alone, a girl with a world of men against her! Ah, Alice!"

"Why didn't she get another job?" objected Miss Ogelthorpe stubbornly. "She may have had an adequate concert voice, if she did fail in opera. Or at least she could have found a position as governess."

"But it was too late. She had given her promise to Max."

Nancy recognized the story. It was perfectly familiar to all three girls. From the subject of Paula Wissner's mother, Nadine had slipped into a panegyric of a contemporary of their own, a girl with a sweet, flawed voice, who had been given an appointment at Vienna without deserving it, and appeared there once and only once as the witch in "Hansel and Gretel." It was a story that never failed to start unpleasant trains of thought for Nancy.

"And all the directors protested, and insisted that she must be removed at once, because she had made a notorious and spectacular failure. Max's wife made a fuss and threatened to divorce him. It was an open scandal."

Nancy, who was to make an international reputation as a dramatic soprano, without ever shedding a tear all her life for a grief that was not her own, looked curiously at Nadine's flushed cheeks and sparkling, misty eyes.

"Max had failed to make her famous. She did not love Max. But she kept her promise and went away with him. She did not love him, but she paid the price."

"What's the moral? *Noblesse oblige*?" inquired Nancy. "I think that girl was a little fool, if you ask me. I'm going, children."

Neither of them protested, or looked up to thank her when she brought Alice an ash tray, an odd-shaped bit of china;

Alice thought metal ash trays unhygienic, because they could not be washed. The blonde head and the black were still close together over the dismantled breakfast table when Nancy, alone upstairs, began to struggle unaided with the intricate hooks of the new beige gown.

"Am I all there? The girdle feels unhooked. I hate empire gowns," she said to Duane, pausing on the front doorstep for his inspection and adjusting his violets.

"All there, but you look disturbed in your mind," said Duane.

"It is disturbing to eat two breakfasts in one morning," said Nancy ungratefully. "But if you'll feed me caviare, I'll forgive you. Duane, were you ever seriously jealous? Of an unworthy object, with a prodigious long nose?"

V

NANCY was too hungry to begin breakfast with caviare by the time she had taken a brisk little walk along the Maximilianstrasse. Duane said that it was to be his peculiar contribution to Nancy's career—and a more important contribution than Gerber's—to see that she had exercise enough to keep her figure. Duane and Nancy talked the most unpardonable nonsense to each other, and laughed at it, and if they had stopped to think what they were saying, would have decided quite seriously that they were brilliantly clever; and perhaps they were. Curious little flashes of insight and self-revelation and prophecy are lost and forgotten sometimes in the idle talk of a lazy day.

Broiled chicken was Duane's Sunday morning *pièce de résistance*. He had eaten it at the same hour to the minute, and done to the same unvaried shade of crisp brown, in all the capitals of Europe. Today they followed it with green salad; Duane was teaching Nancy his recipe for salad dressing, his own invention, which he had never shared with anyone else. They ordered queer-shaped floury cakes, with long German names which Duane refused to learn, and an ice for

Nancy. They had Bénédictine, because they had come to an agreement that it was the one liqueur which matched Nancy's eyes, and Duane warranted it to heighten and preserve their color, if persistently and regularly taken, always under his own supervision. They now felt quite sure they should want no tea, and very little dinner.

They spent the afternoon on the Isar. The empire cut gave an ingénue air to the beige gown. Nancy, pulling off an écru glove to trail one hand in the water, looked to Duane like some gay forgotten little sweetheart of his undergraduate days.

They came home in time to hear the military band play in the Hofgarten. They found the Ogelthorpes there, manifestly absorbed in each other's society. Alice's gown was a blue so garish that only an English taste would choose it and only an English complexion could stand it, so Nancy said. Duane thought that he had seen Teddy Ogelthorpe before somewhere, or perhaps a matinee idol who looked like him. Teddy was of an effeminate type, Duane said, which no man would trust.

Nancy said that it was the polite way of expressing dislike of another man to call him effeminate, just as a woman will call another woman good-hearted when she means to say that she is not attractive to men.

And Duane agreed with this, and with everything else that Nancy said, and made the discovery that he was not bored, although he was listening to music of a compass he could not have reproduced in whistling it even if he could have remembered the tune. Nobody else except Duane seemed in any danger of being bored. A nice boy near him closed his eyes and hummed to himself, and Duane did not despise him for it any further than he had despised him at the first glance for wearing an un-American collar and an unconventional tie. Duane did not despise the nice girl under the nice boy's escort for shedding a tear or two. It might be the fault of his own early training, Duane thought, that music failed to affect him to tears.

But Nancy said that Duane's optimistic, expansive mood meant just one thing: he knew it was dinner time.

The restaurant where they dined is not listed as first class in the guidebooks. Any chance acquaintance in Duane's walk of life would have passed it by as shabby and out of date. Few of Nancy's friends could have comfortably afforded to dine there. Nancy and Duane had dined there three times without meeting anyone they knew, so they were convinced they should never meet anyone they knew there. For the first time it was warm enough for them to have coffee on the terrace at the rear.

After dinner they remembered that it was twenty-four hours since they had been driving together. They drove through the Englischer Garten, out toward Schwabing, and watched the moon come up. By moonlight Nancy had a wistful, white-cheeked, madonna face. Long silences fell between the two, the intimate silences of people who have a great deal to say to each other, so much that presently it will say itself somehow, whether they feel ready to say it or not.

The call of the moonlit night stirred Nancy vaguely through her comfortable sense of physical well being. There had been something amiss with the day, so she thought, though she was fed and amused and exercised as adequately as an entirely healthy young animal could be—some lack in the day; but in spite of that it had been the happiest day she had ever spent with Duane.

When they said good night on the worn doorstep of the *pension*, it was eleven. Nancy refused to believe that, and made Duane strike the hour and the minute and the second on his repeating watch for her.

Two robed shadows were outlined against the second floor windows. Nadine and Alice were watching Duane. Nancy did not care.

"The Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it," she said softly. "Duane, I almost think I would have asked you to take me to the Frauen-Kirche, if I had not been afraid you would laugh at me for wanting to go to

church. Do you know that this is your third Sunday here?"

"I know." Something unimportant, but puzzling, happened: a faint warm thrill crept up her arm from the hand Duane was holding lightly in his—so lightly that Nancy hardly connected the phenomenon with Duane.

Duane avoided her eyes.

"I—do not intend to stay here much longer, Nancy."

Something was coming nearer; something was hiding in Duane's averted eyes that threatened her. Something that had been stealing closer and closer to herself and Duane, never showing its face, but gaining on them every day; gaining, even while she forgot its existence, as she had forgotten it today. She had remembered the danger only once today, only when they were drifting down the Isar, and Nancy, deep in a heated argument against Gerber's conception of the significance of Isolde's death song, became aware that Duane was listening to the sound of her voice but not to her words at all, and flushed and fell silent under his appraising eyes.

Duane had given her no trouble yet; she could take care of herself—so Nancy thought.

"How dark your eyes look, Nancy—almost black tonight! But there is a little shine to them, way down deep," said Duane.

"Duane, go home. Do you want to make me ill from late hours and exposure before the recital?" said Nancy. "It is getting colder tonight. I hate to be cold."

It is violating the laws of nature to fall in love with a woman before you find out how she takes her tea and coffee, and whether she prefers you to contradict her or agree with her, and whether she wants the vote or only pretends to; before you are friends with her. Though he never let her forget it was only a game, Duane found it a pleasant game to make friends with Nancy.

All his life he had gotten what he wanted, and gotten it quickly. His idea of a leisurely vacation from business cares was to make a trip around the

world in his yacht in one day less than the time schedule his skipper had laid out. It had been a relaxation of the pace he had set for his life just to spend two weeks without definite social routine, days that took their own course and drew him gently into mildly amusing comings and goings and pleasure-takings.

The day he caught sight of a familiar back through the window of one of the five hotels which advertise an American bar in Munich—they merely advertise it; Duane had found that out; he had even ceased to regret it—he involved himself at once in a hopeless tangle of cross streets from which he had to be rescued ignominiously by a grubby little boy who did not understand Duane's German. Duane did not know what John Stuyvesant was doing in Munich, and he did not want to find out. John had been his chosen companion for a hunting trip in the Maine woods the summer before; Duane wondered why? A man's man, a taciturn man.

Nancy liked to eat and drink better than she liked to be merry, but she was gay enough, too, and she could listen as well as she talked. One made her confidences. One remembered little forgotten stories out of one's schooldays to confide them to her. One forgot that she was a woman, only to be reminded of it a dozen times a day, with the thrill of a new discovery. What a friend to have, and what a friend to lose!

She had never given him tea in her room. She had met him hatted and gloved at the door, and said good-bye to him there. She had an inexhaustible stream of chatter, everything Gerber had ever said to her, everything she knew or did not know about Nadine's past life, and her own future, and the future of the music drama in America, in reserve to defend herself with, if the talk took a personal turn. Duane was glad that she could defend herself. This was Arcady. One may not stay there forever, but one lingers as long as one may.

It was an engrossing game, this new game of being friends with Nancy. He could not play it forever, but he would

play it a little longer, half dreading the hour when they should be friends no longer, but a man and a woman—the hour that was drawing very near tonight in spite of them both.

Duane had dismissed the cab and walked home through the sleepy streets.

"I'm the man who shuts up New York at night," he quoted to Sano. "Everyone else in bed at nine. Any mail?"

There were two letters; one from the famous health resort where his wife was playing auction bridge twelve hours out of twenty-four, because a famous nerve specialist had told her she had nervous exhaustion. This letter was forwarded through Duane's bankers. No one else had his Munich address.

The other envelope was postmarked Munich, and addressed in a sprawling, angular hand. Duane opened it first. Nancy had mailed him a formal card of invitation to Gerber's recital.

VI

GERBER'S drawing rooms were full when Duane came in. He had dined alone, and for the first time in his life, almost, it occurred to him that he did not enjoy that. With a florist's box under his arm—it was some years since Duane had delivered flowers to any young woman in person; he felt half proud of renewing his youth, and half ashamed of it—he had called upon Nancy at tea time, only to be told that she was resting and could receive no one. So it was twenty-four hours since he had seen Nancy, and that was too long. The recital was an unwarranted interruption of Nancy's privacy, so Duane thought, and the music would be tuneless, and perhaps the air in the rooms would be bad.

But all through the rooms the talk ran gaily, with little bursts of laughter, as if something novel and pleasant were expected to happen. Duane began to find himself half convinced that it would. And in fairness he had to admit that it was an uncommonly effective collection of people—adequately gowned women

and likeable-looking men—who were calling delighted greetings the length of the room, and exchanging bits of news that were evidently important to them, all about individuals Duane had never heard of, and collecting in groups of two and three, to drift out through the open door into the garden behind the house.

Duane had not realized that, entirely without knowing it, he could grow homesick for the sight of a roomful of people in evening dress. After all, he felt more at home there than in Arcady, though nobody made him welcome. Alice Ogelthorpe looked like a distinguished stranger in her cool green gown. An Englishwoman's notion of décolleté always made Duane think that English girls really possessed more neck and arms by the square inch than American girls. The difference must be anatomical; it was too marked to be accounted for by the cut of the gown alone.

A sleek black head and a pair of flashing eyes were all he could see of Nadine. She had a rose between her teeth, after a fashion commoner in art than life. Four men were talking to her. If Duane could have done so, without finding his way the length of both rooms, he would have joined them.

Gerber found time for a courteous word with Duane. Gerber was everywhere. Even if Nancy had not pointed her out to him in the Hofgarten, Duane would have recognized the demure little lady in gray, with the schoolgirl figure, and age-old eyes, for a personage socially, because Gerber gave her fully three minutes of his time. He slipped a friendly arm round Gaspard's shoulders. Even Philistines like Duane knew the composer's much photographed face. Gaspard had kept a finger on the wires of the musical world for all he was a determined recluse, and his nearest approach to a public appearance now was to make one of this unpretentious gathering at Gerber's.

It was an unpretentious gathering, but not an unimportant one. Nobody except Gerber knew exactly how important it was to prove. Tonight, as on all the nights he played host with the tact and ease which was all the more perfect be-

cause he had learned it by main strength, changing himself from a peasant into a passable imitation of a man of the world, Gerber wanted something from every one of his guests.

A mild-mannered neutral-colored gentleman, who stared at more people than he talked to, would have a great deal to say about the selection of the cast for the Wagner festival in August. A white-bearded gentleman with a military decoration, which Duane decided he had bought at a pawnshop, had in reality a perfect right to wear it, or half a dozen others equally magnificent. But Gerber was careful never to pose as a lion hunter. Indeed, it was the most insignificant people in the room who might prove most useful to him, without ever getting any thanks or knowing that they had deserved his thanks. They would spread some report, or repeat some word of praise.

Gerber was a conscientious press agent. He changed his methods to suit the occasion. The little lady in gray was telling all her friends that her husband had tried to make love to Paula Wissner when she came to sing ballads at their last reception, and the friends were expressing sympathy, and becoming eager for a look at Paula. Everyone in the room knew that Carl Müller, Gerber's new tenor, was reported to be a morganatic child of royalty. But Duane had heard nobody mention Nancy Farren.

Gerber had left the room. People were beginning to find themselves chairs. Alice Ogelthorpe made room for Duane on a hard, high-backed sofa, between herself and a young man with an elaborate mustache. The young man did not appear glad to see Duane.

"She had dinner sent up to her room. Her gown did not come home until five," Alice whispered.

This was not important news, but Duane felt inordinately glad to hear it. He was among friends now, not strangers. The young man beside him was only a boy in spite of his fierce-looking mustache, quite an amiable-eyed, ingenuous boy.

Here was the tenor, a fine upstanding

young man—undeniably like a sheep, it is true, but it was through no fault of his own that he had a receding chin. Duane smiled upon him encouragingly.

After settling some little dispute with the accompanist—Gerber's recitals were conducted without formality—Müller began with "Celeste Aida."

Duane approved of that song because he was familiar with it. He was ready to accept the whole programme in a friendly spirit, now that he had recognized the opening number. Müller's next song took up the case of a princess who was in danger of dying of a broken heart because a shepherd had stopped blowing his horn—if Duane could trust his own translation of the German. Duane thought the princess a silly girl, but he approved of this song, too, and he was sorry when Müller made two stiff bows to left and right and went away to Gerber's dining room.

Müller would develop into a thoroughly reliable tenor, Duane was sure, and never indulge in sore throats on the nights when the public had risked the price of an orchestra chair on the chance that he would sing Lohengrin, as he was billed to do. A tenor you could not only like but respect, a useful young man; he could be trusted to give prima donnas adequate support without stealing their laurels, for the favorable impression he had made was forgotten already. You gave him credit for a good performance and thought no more about him, but wondered what was going to happen next.

Duane could not account for the sudden ripple of excitement around him. The accompanist had followed Müller. Now Gerber came in. Without acknowledging the scattering applause that broke out, hardly raising his eyes, he took his place at the piano.

The presence of a conflicting personality in the room interfered with his own effect on his pupil's personality, Gerber believed. He had given up employing an accompanist during lesson hours. But he had never accompanied a pupil at a public performance. He had accompanied no other voice since Calvini sang for a friend or two at his house.

Everyone was curious. Everyone was excited except Gerber.

No paid accompanist could have settled himself at the piano with less flurry of preparation.

"If you are ready, *fräulein*," he called to someone outside the door.

"I wanted her to have a little taken off those heels, but she likes them high," Alice whispered. Duane did not hear her. Gerber was no great believer in prolonged suspense. An audience that waits too long for the climax of the evening grows hard to please. No surprise is big enough to sweep them off their feet. Before her audience had time to expect to be surprised, here was Nancy.

Nancy appeared in straight falling, sweeping yellow, with a handful of orchids, Duane's orchids, thrust through the girdle—with a brilliant sweep of color tinting her cheeks and shrewd, detached amusement narrowing her eyes. She had come into the room unheralded and unafraid, with a friendly smile for Gerber and a frankly challenging smile for her audience. Duane had seen her enter his sister's drawing room with more sense of her own importance. But between Duane and this friendly and unconcerned young singer there was a new barrier. Duane did not know what it was, though he resented it. It was the line of the footlights. Nancy was no longer an amateur. She was as remote from Duane as if she had been on a stage behind footlights. She was a professional singer, a creature of another world from his.

She was to begin with a composition of Gerber's, "The Song of Salome." She stood quite still, but you looked at her and forgot to listen to the restless minor notes of the prelude. Her kindling eyes were the prelude to the song.

She flashed a glance of recognition at Duane, a look downward from infinite heights, a look that brought him no nearer, but a look at Duane, and he thrilled to it.

Would they hunt out the flaws in her voice, as he had done, these alien people? Would they dare? Were they alive to the charm of the filmy gown, with its

misty flutter and shimmer, ethereal, unreal almost? But Nancy was real, a full-blooded creature, a creature of the earth. Had these others eyes to see what it had taken Duane until that very moment to find out, how beautiful she was?

Gerber was yet to write his great opera. He cannot spread himself out thin enough, the critics say. He concentrates. He compresses the essence of a whole opera into a single song. There is more than an opera in "The Song of Salome," more than anyone knew until Nancy made it famous, more than the soul of one woman. It brings you face to face with the careless, magnificent souls of all the women who have been willing to pay the price of a life, their own or another's, for one hour of emotion, one perfect sensation—the women who capture your fancy, though you yourself

. . . play with light loves at the portal,
And wince and relent and refrain.

Helen of Troy lives in the song, and Guinevere, and Francesca, and Isolde.

On the last of her farewell concert tours, Nancy included "The Song of Salome" in her repertoire. Her voice became mellow and more flexible with use. But before a note of her voice had been heard, she had won the critical little audience at Gerber's.

The first of that long and brilliant series of impersonations which made up her career was bewilderingly simple work, like all the rest. Was it a turn of the head, the tilt of her chin, her lowered eyelids or her faint, vanishing smile that determined her success, and made her into the woman she chose to be? You did not know. But you were looking at Salome.

Gerber struck the last taunting, melancholy chord of his prelude. Nancy—was it Nancy?—began to sing.

VII

"Go quickly. The *fräulein* is tired."

Nancy settled her cloak with the backward shrug of adjustment that she had learned from watching men get into

their overcoats, stretched herself back into her corner of the cab and stared covertly at Duane.

Duane could wear an Inverness without looking as if he had escaped from the chorus of a Gaiety show. Nancy gave thanks for this. Duane had good shoulders. He had also a good tailor. He was unusually pale tonight. It was a clear, healthy pallor, but his face looked thinner so. The cheekbones looked a shade more prominent than usual. In spite of the square chin, Duane's was not a heavy face. Altogether, she found Duane good to look at.

"Duane dear, you have not told me you liked me."

"Do I need to?"

"No."

It was considerate of Duane not to talk to her, Nancy thought. She would rather think about the recital than discuss it, even with her good friend Duane. It was easier to think than to talk when you were tired.

After the Salome song had come a pretty little one about a young nun who had renounced her sweetheart, and now must remain true to her vows, although she wished very much to go back to him. Last of all, Nancy sang the "Liebestod." She needed months of training yet before singing such difficult music with any sense of security, but Gerber had insisted that the "Liebestod" would complete the impression she had made, because it required more range and more assured technique than the other two songs, and proved that Nancy was not a sort of glorified lightning change artist out of vaudeville, but a great singer, challenging comparison with other great singers.

Gerber would not permit an encore, although she felt that she owed one; how could she have earned quite so much enthusiasm with three little songs? Were not these stupid people to go mad over her Salome? She was tired of Salome. But she smiled as graciously as she knew how at the stupid people when Gerber took her hand and said:

"We thank you, both of us. It is Fräulein Farren. She is to be heard in August at the Prinz-Regenten, in Wagner roles."

Though she despised them already, and wanted more imposing audiences to sing to, crowded theaters, tier above tier of boxes, Nancy, no longer ago than the afternoon, had been uncontrollably afraid of these same stupid people. She had given way to her nerves—Nancy never wasted time on a losing fight—evaded Fritz and left him to keep jealous guard over the locked door of her empty room, while she risked the effect of a damp and drizzly day upon her throat, hunting for daffodil yellow ribbon. It had become suddenly intolerable to her to think of singing a note unless the ribbons in her lingerie matched her gown.

It was a long time since afternoon—months and years. That afternoon Gerber and herself had been the only two people in the world who knew that she had a future. Now all Gerber's circle knew. And now Duane knew. She was no longer Duane's protégée; she was an independent woman on the way to success. She was almost through with Duane.

His square, firm chin looked cruel. Duane could be cruel; Nancy had always known that. She acknowledged it, now that she was almost through with him, now that she had nothing more to fear from him. He had always been kind to her; why had she ever been afraid of him? He had hurried her away from Gaspard—she did not dare tell Duane what Gaspard had been whispering to her—from Gaspard and from everybody else, and packed her into a cab with all her flowers; and now he was silent because she did not want him to talk. Duane was quite as adaptable as a well trained servant.

Nancy did not like adaptable men. What sort of men did she like? Had she ever had time to find out?

"Talk, Duane. Why don't you talk?" said Nancy sharply.

"We are almost there," said Duane.

She felt his hand on hers, warm through her glove, for one long minute; then he began to gather up her flowers.

"Duane dear, thank you so very much for taking care of me," she said.

The cab had stopped. Why should

she be so glad that the drive was over? She struggled with her latchkey. She did not want Duane to help her. Frau Steinmann's hall looked dark and inhospitable, but she was glad to see it, unusually glad. Was she developing a prima donna's tricky nerves already?

"Good night, and thank you," she called to Duane as gaily as she could.

But Duane had paid the cabman and dismissed the cab. He came hesitatingly toward her, and followed her into the house.

"I'd better carry your flowers upstairs," he said.

Nancy stood looking up at him. How tall Duane was! His arms were full of her flowers, the orchids, Alice's roses and the rest. The violets were from Fritz. What delicate-fingered hands Duane had, for so big a man—effeminate, if they had not been such strong hands.

"You think of everything. You are a dear," said Nancy, and gathered her gauzy skirt clear of the dubiously clean stair carpet. Duane followed her. How sweet the roses were! Would she ever grow tired of flowers? Tired of the great wreaths and set pieces passed over the footlights, looking at them as if she did not see them while she bowed her thanks for them? Already she was tired of orchids—ugly, abnormal things; and she was tired of Duane, who had sent them. How could she bear to hear his footsteps behind her, keeping pace with her own up four interminable flights of stairs?

There was no light in Nadine's room. Had the child slipped home ahead of them? Was she in bed already? No, Nadine was a little nighthawk. How pretty she had looked, in a white frock of Alice's, remodeled with a deft touch or two and girdled with scarlet! Nadine was still at Gerber's. Above the third floor, there was nobody in the house but herself and Duane.

Fritz had vanished from Gerber's after she finished singing. He would walk the streets half the night working himself into states of emotion about her. Was there nobody awake in the house but herself and Duane?

The last flight of stairs was uncar-

peted. Nancy had been holding her breath to listen to the footsteps behind her; but there could be nothing about the steps to fill her with a child's unreasoning terror of the dark. If she turned round, she would see Duane, her friend, behind her, carrying her flowers; nothing unfamiliar, nothing terrible. But a child afraid of the dark does not turn to look behind, and Nancy did not turn.

At the top of the stairs she could see the open door of her room. Her jug and basin and her one glass vase would hold most of her flowers.

"Good night, Duane."

The words came in a breathless whisper. Before she could shake herself free from the panic that had mastered her, to speak, or to realize fully that the panting thud in her ears was the sound of his breathing, and that the hot thing that pressed itself against her bare shoulder was a man's face, Nancy was in her room and the door was shut behind her, and she was caught close in Duane Elliot's arms.

It was almost instantly that he released her. Nancy did not know that. She had lost her sense of time. She had lost her power to think. She would fall, it seemed to her, if Duane did not take her in his arms again. But he must not touch her again. She could not see, and she could not breathe. There was no air to breathe. The room was full of smells, the stale smell of burned-out cigarettes, the scent of her roses, heavily sweet.

Her blind dizziness, and the bodily weakness that forced her to grope for a chair and sink into it because she could not stand, Nancy knew for fear. She was afraid of Duane. And because she was afraid, she must look at Duane. She must not take her eyes from his face. His face had no features. It was only a blur of white before her eyes.

"I want you to go," she heard a woman's voice whisper brokenly, her own voice. That was Duane's laugh she heard. She knew Duane's laugh. Duane was laughing at her. He was laughing, and he was at the door now, fumbling with the knob of the door. What was he doing? There was a breathless pause, and then a rasping, grating sound

—the turn of the key in the lock of the door.

"What do you want?"

"You know what I want."

A dull flush spread slowly over Duane's white face. The pupils of his eyes contracted. At the corner of one temple, a tiny pulse beat, barely visible.

He had laughed at her. Nancy could have laughed, too, now, for this was no newly created danger threatening her, inevitable, impossible to escape. It was a threadbare, claptrap happening, cheap melodrama, a scene from a play; and in plays the heroines escaped danger. The heroines were poor creatures, pen and ink women, made of other people's brain stuff; and she was Nancy Farren, alive in her own right, strong and afraid no longer, since she had heard the turn of the key in the door.

"Duane, it's old stuff. Get up," said Nancy.

He was on his knees now beside her. She could see his shoulders shaking. His close cropped dark head was an ugly blot against the pale tint of her gown. She must not push him away. She must not struggle. She must be quiet. It came and went, this fever that had gripped him. She must watch for some sign of reaction, some temporary return to coherent speech.

"You are wonderful—wonderful!"

She let him draw down her face to his. How hot his cheek felt! It seemed a long time before he kissed her.

"I will be good to you. I will take care of you."

His breath came more regularly. She felt his kisses on her unresisting hands.

"Duane, it's no good. You'll have to go now. I do not love you. I am not frightened. You'll have to unlock the door. You'll have to go."

Nancy's voice was low and entirely gentle. She might have been making a trivial explanation over and over again with untiring patience for the benefit of a somewhat refractory and exceedingly stupid child.

What she was saying it did not matter. Duane did not answer her. He did not understand her perhaps. But whatever they meant, it was clear that

he wanted the unhurried, unbroken reiteration of words to stop. In response to it, some hidden nerve of his registered a protest of maddening insistence. Duane wanted Nancy to stop speaking. He wanted her to close her calm, unwavering, shallow eyes.

"Nancy."

They were standing now, face to face. His arms groped for her and closed round her. Nancy did not relax or draw away. She put both hands on his shoulders and gripped them tight. She was proud of the force of her grip, the accurate response of trained, coördinated muscles; and inch for inch, measured against the man's, and arrayed to combat it, she was proud of the sheer brute strength of her own body, the strength that answers the call of the day when you wake slowly on sunny mornings, or gathers to meet the challenging shock of cold water when you plunge in to dive.

Because Nancy loved fair play, as an ancestor of hers whose story she had never heard had loved it when he threw his dagger out of the window and died fighting with his bare hands, she would have lent some of her strength to Duane if she could.

For it had come, the moment when she had relaxed her guard, and which she had ceased to dread, the clash between herself and Duane, the clash of will against will, their great moment; and she could not prolong it. It was passing; it was almost over; and she knew that it was to be her moment, not Duane's.

"Nancy—"

Duane's arms relaxed and fell away. She was safe from him now, Nancy knew, and Duane also knew. His eyes looked like a dog's, dim and puzzled. He flung up an arm across his face with a shrugging motion, as if to shield his eyes from the light. Nancy rested a hand on his shoulder.

"It is all right," she said. "I am not angry. You were in wrong—that's all. You'd better go now."

"I'd better go now."

With the sense of assisting unauthorized at some great mystery, implacable as birth or death, she watched the

strange face before her turn to the face of the man she knew, Duane Elliot's face, grown suddenly old and tired; a face to awake pity and tenderness for him, if she had been capable of pity or tenderness for Duane, even so much as she was capable of feeling for Fritz, or a favorite cat or dog.

"You see," Nancy said, half apologetically, "I never loved you. You thought I did. You counted on that, I guess."

"Yes, I counted on that. You don't want to see me again?"

His face was drawn and heavily veined and colorless. How old he looked; a mean antagonist. She had no pride in her victory.

"The money you lent me," she faltered—"I meant to have told you before—I want to tell you—"

He was not listening. He opened the door. On the landing she saw by the flickering lamplight a scattering trail of fallen rose petals. She heard Fritz's cuckoo clock call faintly twice. She tried to remember what time she had left Gerber's. Duane must have been less than fifteen minutes in her room.

"It is you," Nancy said, "who won't want to see me again. Duane, I am sorry. You should not have locked the door."

VIII

"SHE looks like the morning after."

"The morning after what, Alice? I always want to hear the end of that sentence."

"You are too young, Infant."

Nancy sat up in bed. Nadine had drawn up the shades and flooded the room with sunshine. Alice piled the three stiffest and most uncompromising pillows behind Nancy, settled a compactly arranged breakfast tray on her knees and sat down close to the couch and looked at her with shrewd and unblinking eyes.

"Do you hate to wake up in the room with a piano? I never get used to it. I like real bedrooms, and I like to sleep in a real bed." Nadine ran a flexible-fingered hand along the piano keys.

"Why didn't you carry the pink roses? Pink and yellow are sweet together. Look here, Alice. I told you the bodice was silk-lined, too. I told you last night."

Nadine fittled about the room, gathering up Nancy's scattered possessions, smoothing out a stray glove with quick, birdlike jerks and pats, appropriating a full-blown pink rose, and settling it finally over her left ear after prolonged experiment, chattering all the time like a peculiarly irresponsible child.

"Just waking up in the same room that I go to bed in is so terrible to me some days that I could cry about it," she went on, perching on Nancy's couch and nibbling a lump of sugar from the bowl on the tray. "I dream such strange dreams; I feel so much older every day, when I wake, that I should think the room would look different in the morning. You have a good day, Nancy, to drive to Schwabing with Mr. Duane."

How trying it was, this inconsequent chatter of Nadine's, which used to seem artless and charming; restless, mischievous fingers, prying delicately into secrets she would not take the trouble to draw into the light; careless, teasing fingers. What secrets of her own, what knowledge of her friends' secrets, were masked by Alice's offhand manner and her blank, indifferent eyes?

A troublesome procession of questions suggested themselves to Nancy. Had anyone heard Duane come into her room? Duane was not a harmless tame cat, to go in and out unquestioned, like Fritz. The standards of the Pension Stella were not conventional, but they were rigid and unrelenting such as they were. Had Nadine met Duane on her way home from Gerber's? Had she noticed his trembling hands and his white, twitching face?

"Poor Paula was scarcely encored, and she was in good voice, and looks two years younger in white. But she was an anti-climax. You got all her applause. Gerber featured you at her expense. He does one thing at a time, and does not care what he sacrifices to get it done. I am afraid of Gerber."

Nadine's chatter had a defiant ring.

"I will not admit that you are my superior," Nadine's manner said. "Do not attempt to put on airs with me."

Both her friends had made their congratulations to Nancy casually, as if she had done nothing unusual the night before, but they had let her sleep until noon, and brought her coffee, and this was a new attention. Nancy was a superior being, to be waited upon and envied now. Nancy was glad, but she would rather have been left to take her coffee alone. Nadine's laugh sounded shrill—could it have changed key over night? Alice's even white teeth were too big, Nancy thought, and the laundress had put too much bluing in her stiff, tailored shirtwaist.

But Nancy entertained her unwelcome guests politely, so politely that they felt ill at ease. They did not idle away half the afternoon in her room, or take her to dine at the shabby little place where they had celebrated Alice's birthday, and the first decently paid bit of accompanying Nadine secured. And Nadine slipped away without telling Nancy how Gaspard had held her hand, and a young man whose name she did not remember had tried to kiss her.

"It is a new heaven and a new earth," Nancy told herself, although she could not quite believe it yet. She could not shake off all at once the weight of Duane's claim on her, which had been growing more oppressive every day. She could not realize yet that she was free of him.

She was not in the least angry with Duane. He would not leave Munich without trying to see her again. She would send back a letter or two unopened, she would keep her head through a stormy scene or two, and after she had forgiven all the scenes and forgotten them, she would remember—not too often—a man named Duane Elliot, who had once been kind to her—and who had been paid in full.

Nancy put on a fresh little frock of violet silk and a big hat loaded with violets. Gerber was not receiving his pupils or anyone else today. Today she would see no one who made fun of her for doing

it, so Nancy made a leisurely and careful toilet. After it was completed, she took from her jewel case the most valuable thing in it, the only valuable thing, a sealed envelope, with Duane's name on it. She completed the address and stamped the envelope. It had been a talisman to her, and restored her self-respect a dozen times a day since Duane came to Munich. She was ready to part with it now.

The day Nancy added Duane's cheque to her depleted bank account—down to the last twenty dollars of the amount she raised by pawning her mother's pearls—she ran through the list of her father's business associates in New York. There were only two friends of his on the list; he had been too generally popular to make any real friends. Of these, one was poor now, as Adam Farren counted poverty, and as his daughter still counted it. The other had kept his fortune by a conservative financial policy, which is a good way to keep fortunes but not to make them. Nancy went to see a man who was neither poor nor conservative, and who had been her father's openly declared enemy.

"You were the real cause of my father's failure," said Nancy to this gentleman in his private office. "There was no way to prove it, but he knew it, and you know it, and so do I."

"But I am not finding fault with you," she added, as she saw his hand reach out toward the bell. "I am introducing myself, striking a personal note; a graceful introduction requires that. I did not come to ask favors of you."

"Why did you come?" asked the gentleman, interested in spite of himself.

"I came to give you a thousand dollars," said Nancy.

She did not waste her words, but she spoke deliberately. This interested the gentleman still further, for most of his world was in awe of him.

"I am leaving for Munich the fifth of the month," she said. "That gives you just a week to double the money."

"Begging." He reached for his chequebook, a little relieved and a little disappointed. His caller was not going to furnish him with a new sensation, but

neither was she going to make him very much trouble. And she looked like a person who could make trouble.

"Not begging," said Nancy—"a gambling proposition. I came to you because you are a good gambler. I am doing you an honor. I could have broken into any office in town as easily as I broke into yours, you see."

"How do I know you haven't been elsewhere?" he objected.

"You know," said Nancy. "Talk business. I want just two thousand dollars. Don't send me a dollar more, and don't fail to send me some sort of account. I sha'n't understand it; I am rather a fool about investments; I never had time to make a study of the subject. But I want some proof that you made the money. If you send it as your gift, I shall tear up the cheque. I am not begging."

"Suppose I lose your thousand?"

"You won't," said Nancy. "You can double it as easily as I would win a rubber of bridge."

"But suppose I lose?" he insisted.

"I want two thousand dollars," said Nancy, rising. "I have no use for one thousand. If you lose it, don't let me hear from you. You will have saved me the trouble of losing it myself."

"Preposterous! What do you want of the money? I won't do it."

"Think it over," said Nancy, looking at him with her father's eyes.

She laid on his desk a cheque for a thousand dollars, made out to him, and a card with her steamer address. Then she passed out of his office, and out of his life. His secretary brought her his draft on Paris half an hour before her boat sailed—a draft for two thousand dollars, no more and no less.

Nancy had risked only half her capital. She was a financier, not a gambler. If she had lost her money, she would still have had a thousand left, enough to give her an economical year in Munich. Now that she had three thousand, she would still keep her expenses down. She would not part with her reserve fund until she had begun to make money, but she would not spend it; she would keep two thousand in reserve, ready to pay to Duane.

The discounts in the shops, the cut rates at theaters, at concerts, everywhere, for students, had surprised her, though she had chosen Munich instead of Paris because she hoped to live cheaply there. The elaborate toilets which threw Duane into a state of bewilderment about her financial condition she bought at a nominal figure at an exchange to which rich women sent their gowns, an organized charity to provide young singers with the gowns actually necessary for them to make a favorable impression in public. She permitted herself to go shabby when she was not on parade. Last night Gerber had promised her concert work before the engagement in August. Today Nancy mailed her cheque to Duane.

"Duane, I can't ever thank you."

"Can't you—Nancy?"

That June evening, so cool and fresh, as they motored out into the country after their dinner at Claremont—they were more careless of appearances after Duane's wife left town for the summer; the clammy feel of the air in her little studio, humid with the promise of heat; the twang of a mandolin next door; the eager pressure of Duane's hand, all that she understood he was asking, all that she implied she would give him in exchange for his money—Nancy did not choose to remember these things.

The envelope dropped into the post-box. Nancy walked on through unfrequented streets. She did not wish to meet Duane.

An ignoble way out of an ignoble bargain? No. She had borrowed money, and paid it back. Her obligation was discharged.

She had turned into a familiar street automatically, the narrow, shady street where Gerber lived.

"Herr Gerber is not to be disturbed. He will see no one," said Johann.

"Is he in the music room?" said Nancy.

Without waiting for an answer, she ran upstairs to the music room door and knocked.

"I am coming in," she called, laughing, for now she knew that she had put on the violet gown for Gerber.

IX

"I AM an instrument maker," said Otto Gerber. "To be a good instrument maker, that is of more practical use to the world than to be a good man. I do not adopt the generally accepted moral code—"

"So?" Gaspard pretended to be very much grieved and shocked at hearing that Gerber had no moral code. It was evident that Gaspard wished to amuse her, so Nancy laughed and filled his cup again.

She had interrupted a *kaffeeklatsch* in Gerber's drawing room. Whatever the two men talked about when they were alone together would have bored her very likely, but Nancy would have liked one opportunity to find out what it was. Gaspard never talked seriously to women. He believed this to be the first principle of success as a lady killer, and he believed himself to be an accomplished ladies' man. Nancy smiled upon him as if she thought so, too.

The coffee service was glaringly patterned, and arranged on the tray with apparent intent to reproduce some geometrical diagram, but the coffee was good, and there were plenty of cakes. People said that Gerber made an affectation of his big appetite and his bad table manners.

"The instrument from which the human voice proceeds is the whole human body," Gerber was going on, "not the chest and throat alone, but the perfectly coördinated whole. If one stands better, one sings better; if one walks better, one sings better. But that is not enough. Besides the muscles of the body, the thoughts of the mind must be in harmony and the soul alive, that the whole instrument may be faultlessly in tune."

"A faultless instrument, yes," murmured Gaspard approvingly, turning his handsome long-lashed eyes upon Nancy.

Gerber had taught her to make the most of her height, a more delicate and intricate matter than correct carriage and gait alone. Nancy had fenced since she was ten—Adam Farren had taught her, up in the big billiard room at his

country house; society reporters used to bribe her maid to get pictures of her dressed for tennis or golf the year she came out. She had come to Gerber a fine figure of a woman; now she was something more commanding than that, and more appealing. Some turn of the wrist as she manipulated the ugly coffee service with her strongly made, ringless hands, some new grace of bearing, perfected the picture she made as she sat on Gerber's stiffly upholstered sofa. Nancy was not given to undervaluing her attractions, but she would have liked to say to Gaspard:

"You know very well that I have on a tumbled rajah walking dress. I am not a faultless instrument. Stop making eyes at me. Stop talking. Let Gerber talk."

When he was not scolding or swearing, she liked the sound of Gerber's speaking voice, low and penetrating, and she liked to look at him, stretched back in the most comfortable chair in the room, with his brilliant eyes half closed, as he was now.

"To become a perfect instrument for the production of sound," Gerber said, "is not that reaching a high stage of moral and physical development? If I have taught you to make the best music you are capable of, is it not well with your body and your soul? I have done them both good—no?"

"On the way here," observed Gaspard, "I passed your perfected instrument, Paula Wissner, in the carriage with—whom do you think? But I must not tell you in the respected presence of Fräulein Farren."

"Nonsense," said Nancy. "If you mean that Paula is making a scandal with Von Sternburg, I knew it before you did, probably, my dear sir. Besides, Paula is not in the least in love with Sternburg."

"Feminine logic," said Gaspard, rising. "Who are we, that we air our ill formulated opinions before her? Is she not competent to instruct us both? I leave her—to instruct you, my dear Otto."

"Odious little man!" said Nancy, when the door shut behind him.

"He thinks we are in love, and so he has left us *tête-à-tête*," said Gerber, amused. "You do not like him? So? Paula, too, did not like him, but she had reason; she was jealous of Gaspard. For Paula—*ach*, why deny it?—was in love with me."

"Sometimes you are nothing but a little boy," said Nancy, "a silly little boy, just as other men are."

"What a great discovery!" Gerber's eyes made light of the discovery.

"And sometimes you make me feel like a silly little girl." How could that plaintive note, she wondered, have crept into her voice?

"Thou, with the world at thy feet!"

Nancy had not the world at her feet; it was an unworthy ambition of Nancy's to want the world at her feet; that was what Gerber had somehow managed to say.

"If they would let me sing the first Rhine maiden's music without putting an idiotic lemon-colored wig on my head," said Nancy crossly, "I would not mind waiting two hours to rehearse fifteen minutes. I have wasted the afternoon. And I have burned my hand on your clumsy old coffee pot. Otto, I wish I had not come here today. I don't know why I came."

If Gerber knew why, he did not enlighten her. He looked up at her placidly out of his low, deep chair.

"Gaspard is not in sympathy with your work at all. At the Sternburgs' last night, I heard him say that you were a sentimentalist, writing in an age when sentimentalism is out of date. He is jealous of you. They got me to sing English ballads at the Sternburgs'. Milk and water music. What is the use of it? What is the use of my making a *début* in this stuffy place? I am not good enough to appear at all if I am not good enough for Paris. Why does Gaspard think that I am in love with you?"

Gerber looked as if unreasonable young women with fiery tempers were perfectly easy to manage. Perhaps he found them so.

"Gaspard is the best friend I have," he said softly.

"And I must not find fault with Gas-

pard? I have no right to? I am not your friend?"

"You are not my friend," repeated Gerber, as if he were making some particularly flattering confidence to Nancy. He leaned across the table and took her burned hand lightly between his big, cool hands.

"An overgrown, spoiled child," he said. "How young you are! Just twenty-five, and already you have signed your first contract. How soon you will have contracts to sign that I do not superintend the signing of! Let Paris wait. Paris, and a greater world than Paris, are waiting for you. Paris is eternally young, and it will never grow any older; but I"—his laugh had the mocking ring of eternal youth—"I am old already."

He looked like the spirit of youth, Nancy thought, or else like the oldest and wisest man in the world. Gerber's face, though it was often enough before her eyes when she thought about him, and vividly plain to her, had always some surprise for her when she saw it again, some trick of the drooping eyelids, a new shade of meaning in the smile. It was an elusive face, hard to remember, she thought. Now she tried to make a picture of it in her mind, the abstracted smile and the laughter in the eyes.

"I wish you'd speak English," she said. "In German I never can tell when you are making fun of me."

"I—of thee?" Nancy had uttered a sacrilege, the low, vibrating voice assured her, with its undercurrent of tenderness. Gerber leaned closer. Was it because his face was so close to hers that it looked strange to her, because of the altered perspective? Gerber was ugly, an ugly little man with big hands. Nancy was looking into a radiant face with caressing, compelling eyes. Was this the face that Paula Wissner had seen? "I—I—of thee?"

Thin, sensitive lips brushed her hand. Nancy pulled her hand away and stood up, a little bewildered, a little breathless, cheeks hotly flushed, a splendidly erect young figure, looking down at the ugly little man in the chair.

"I shall have to go," she said. "Otto,

it will be no sort of use if you fall in love with me, you know."

"Come in, Johann. Do not stand there. We are quite ready," said Gerber, without turning his head.

The man came noiselessly into the room. He put the coffee cups gently back on the tray, lowered a window shade and pushed Gaspard's chair into place. How long had he stood at the door, watching his master with his furtive, shifty eyes? His pink, wrinkleless face looked like a woman's, fresh from a beauty parlor.

"Get the *fräulein's* coat," said Gerber. "Light the lamps in the studio. I shall not dress for dinner. We shall want dinner at eight. That is all."

"Dinner at eight! Who is dining with him?" thought Nancy.

She tilted her black hat farther back, framing her face in the sweep of the brim, both arms stretched up to adjust the long pins, her eyes on the gilt-framed mirror above her. She asked him a question, very casually.

"You are not, are you?"

"I do not understand what you mean."

"You are not in love with me?"

"My dear young lady," said Gerber drily, "I make my instruments—I do not play upon them."

Nancy walked home alone through the gathering twilight. A month ago she would have felt lonely. In June the world without Duane had seemed a lonely world, but she was content with it now. The unending round of rehearsals no longer seemed monotonous to her. Her work no longer teased her, as it had begun to do, by its unrelenting monotony.

Paris was more than an alluring hope; it was a definite promise now. Gerber had begun to pull wires for her a year in advance. Upstairs in the music room, without the help of the yellow gown, she had had triumphs in broad daylight, conquests over critical audiences of two and three, which affected her career more directly than the recital had done. But Nancy was in no hurry for her success to begin. For the first time in her life, she was in no hurry about anything.

Walking home through the warm dusk, she indulged in leisurely good resolutions. A certain blue evening gown of Clara Von Sternburg's would fit Nadine, with only a slight alteration, and it was beneath Nancy's dignity now to accept such a gift for herself. She would take the gown to Nadine's room after dinner, not now. Nancy wanted to be all alone until dinner time. She wanted a half-hour to sit in her darkened room and watch the lights outside. But the three must have one of their old intimate evenings in Alice's room. Nancy would outgrow the intimacy quickly enough. She did not need to break it off abruptly, as she had been doing. And she was genuinely fond of Nadine.

Nancy heard someone moving inside her room as she opened the door; a deep, gasping breath, the sound of a chair pushed back.

"Fritz!" she said. "Why didn't you light the lamp?"

But it was not Fritz who lifted a bowed head from the piano keys and got up and came gropingly toward her in the half-light. It was Alice Ogelthorpe.

"I couldn't stand my own rooms," she explained incoherently. "So I came up here. Don't make a light for me. I'm going, Nancy."

"Won't you sit down? You aren't ill? There is nothing I can do?"

"No, nothing."

What a high, toneless voice the girl had! Could there be anything the matter? Ought Nancy to follow her? But you would sooner have suspected her grandmother of a secret grief than Alice. Only vaguely disquieted, Nancy returned to her own interrupted train of thought.

Who could be going to dine with Otto Gerber?

X

"TAKE care of yourself," said Nancy.

"I can't take care of myself. No woman can. You don't know that yet; you will have to learn it," said Nadine, intent on the face that looked out at her from Nancy's mirror. She looked at it sternly and impersonally, as if it could

have no possible attraction for her and the best fate it could hope for was to escape from her inspection without betraying some hidden defect to her.

But it was a charming face, the piquant little face under the broad-brimmed, flower-crowned hat. The black eyes had lost their illusions, and forgiven the world that took them away. The red lips had an appealing droop, when they were not laughing. The lips were heavily rouged, and the pale cheeks were delicately powdered. Nadine had experimented half a day to find the blend of French rouge and rice powder that suited Nancy's coloring. She had taught Nancy all that Nancy knew about cosmetics, and she knew more about them than she would ever teach Nancy.

Under Nadine's manipulation, borrowed articles took on a new distinction, and became unquestionably her property, so that their rightful owners were ashamed to claim them again. She had come up to borrow a Dresden flowered scarf of Nancy's. It gave the last touch of daintiness to her short-skirted white frock. For the third time that week, she was to spend the evening with Gaspard.

"Lady doll. Boarding school miss." Nadine gave herself one glance of grudging approval, as she pinned a stray lock of black hair out of sight with a hairpin of Nancy's, and coaxed another lock, which would never have ventured to stray without encouragement, into curl above her left ear.

"I have got to look young—as young as I am and younger," she explained, "because he is so old. He is just old enough to make a fool of himself about a woman. You need not worry about me, dear, for—I tell you first, before I even tell him—I mean to marry Gaspard."

"Where are you going now?" said Nancy.

"Wherever I choose," said Nadine. "Last night I pretended I had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours; you know, I did not like my dinner. Gaspard was so sorry for me, and took me somewhere, and I looked down the

menu and ordered the five most expensive things I could see. I did not want them. But he bores me so that I let him spend all the money he will—to pay for boring me, you know."

She laughed her innocent, confiding laugh, and dropped a butterfly kiss on Nancy's hair and ran away. Nancy heard the quick, light tap of her tiny French heels on the stairs. She pushed back the trailing ends of ribbon and lace into the drawer where Nadine's little hands had made chaos.

Marry Gaspard! Very probably Nadine would. She had the soul of an unscrupulous adventuress, or an irreproachable wife and mother. She was bound to be one of the two. Nancy knew her so well, with her precocious brain and her unawakened heart. Nadine would not lose her head over Gaspard. She would play her game with all the whole-hearted, stolen delight of a little girl, masquerading without leave in her mother's gowns. All Nadine's crude little schemes and plots were transparent enough to Nancy.

Nancy smiled now over the recollection of a tableau she had surprised through the open door of Fritz's room: Nadine with her dimpled hand tight in Fritz's, and her pretty, flushed face looking confidently up into his. Nadine explained to Nancy that she had gone to his room to have a splinter taken out of her finger, and that she would never, never think of flirting with Fritz, who was like an elder brother to her.

"Don't bother to tell lies. I am not jealous, my dear," Nancy had said.

Now she wondered idly:

"Has nobody in this rabbit warren of a place any secrets except me?"

Fritz, in his room, was doing something violently noisy: throwing boot-trees against the closet wall, apparently. No, making preparations to go out, it now appeared, for he slammed his door and walked sturdily down the stairs. He had not paused or listened outside her door, but Nancy guessed that his pleading eyes had been fixed upon it. For five, six days Fritz had not made her tea. She must be under the ban of his displeasure. Methods of winning him

back occurred to her, often tried methods, for that was the only way to get any excitement out of Fritz, losing him and winning him back.

Once she had called to him, out of a darkened room: "Alice! Nadine! Is that you? How ill I feel!" and Fritz, repentant and eager, had rushed in and thrown himself down beside the couch.

Once she had tapped at his bedroom door on a sunshiny morning, and called: "I can't fasten the third hook from the top. Please hook it for me. You need not speak to me or look at me, Fritz"—and then had evaded his clumsy, hungry arms when he burst out of his room crying repentantly: "I love you! I shall never love anyone but you!"

Where was he now? Making a formal call upon Nancy's chief rival, whose father was a prosperous brewer? If Nancy had been sure he was going there, she might have called Fritz back. But even in the freshened air of evening, it was rather too warm tonight to go through the emotional strain of a reconciliation scene.

Besides, a tattered French novel of Nadine's invited her. Fritz had taken away the light of his approval from her, but he had not taken away the big box of bonbons, the latest of his extravagant offerings to Nancy. Should she go down and share the candy with Alice, the only other grown-up person in the *pension*, by Nancy's critical standards? Nancy reflected that she had had the last of Alice's Kummel the night before, and that Alice was uncommunicative and a bad listener, of late, absent-eyed and uninspiring.

"I will stay here and be comfortable," she thought, beginning to read.

Nancy did not follow Nadine's advice and skip to the fourth chapter where the wicked part began; and she did not read as far as chapter four. She let the tattered book slip down from her knees. She had a more enthralling romance before her, to dip into at the crucial scenes and dream over and close at will; an unfinished romance, but—

"I know the end," thought Nancy, though she was just beginning it. Could

it be only two weeks ago, the first time Gerber had kissed her?

A man's first kiss does not make the world over for every woman. Women pass through some gateways blindfolded. They go past milestones in the dark. Nancy had passed a milestone without seeing it, two weeks ago.

Her pink frock, the same one which she had asked Fritz to hook, toned prettily with the violet-covered hat. She felt satisfied with herself, though she had no particular desire for anyone else to feel satisfied with her that morning. She tore a rent in the light, soft stuff of her skirt on the stair rail, and she wanted sympathy, so she held up the torn fabric for Gerber to see.

"Flowers of spring," said Gerber, "violets and—a rose," and slipped his arm around her, so lightly that she could have broken away without a struggle. She scarcely felt his arms tighten as he kissed her. His lips felt cool and firm against hers.

"Don't be silly, Otto," said Nancy, standing quite still, with her shrewd and friendly eyes upon his. He was taller than she had thought, only a little shorter than herself.

"As you like," said Gerber with a little shrug, and the lesson began. If Nancy sang with more animation than usual that morning, and provoked fewer criticisms, that was quite natural. The months of work were beginning to tell. Her improvement, almost imperceptible at first, seemed uncannily rapid now. She had very little more to unlearn.

Nancy used to laugh to herself in these days, when she tiptoed up Gerber's stair unannounced, to persuade him to come for a walk, perhaps, and heard him thundering at some terrified victim of his in the studio. Nobody who knew his gentle and friendly heart, as she was growing to, could stand in awe of Gerber.

But Nancy knew Gerber better than any of those others, of whom she was unreasonably jealous; hysterical women, who made a villain or an idol of him, to suit the limits of their imaginations.

"You are my severest critic," he used to tell Nancy as he played to her, "for you are interested in nothing but your-

self. It is only the songs that are indeed worthy to live which are beautiful enough to break into your heart and force you to listen. Little heart of ice, you care nothing for my songs or for me. That is why we are friends, we two."

Nancy could skip chapters of her book that failed to please her, or shut the book upon them, but she could not quite forget the afternoon when Gerber played her the second movement of his new sonata.

The second movement, the *andante* movement, was a pulsing, throbbing thing, like the beat of a giant heart. It was without warning, after a twilight hour of trifling with old melodies and experimenting with half developed snatches of new themes, that Gerber swept into the slow, majestic swing of that rhythm. His master hand fastened upon all the glory and pain and tenderness in the music, and forced them upon her ears. He played as he had not played since he retired from the concert platform. To make the most spectacular of his early successes when he had the world to win, he had never struggled as he did to master his audience of one, but the girl in the far corner of the candle-lit room did not know that.

"Otto, what was that? Never play it to me again," she said; "I cannot bear it. It is too beautiful. It hurts too much. You are a great man."

She was crying as he knelt beside her and drew her into his arms.

The next morning there was an added touch of crispness to Nancy's toilet, and a note of defiance in her voice. There was wrath in her heart against the unlucky man who had made her cry. She had made an exhibition of herself before Gerber. Very well, Gerber should pay for it. Let him try to kiss her, let him so much as take her hand, and she would turn upon him and rail at him for a sentimental little German.

But Gerber was not disposed to be sentimental. He was brusque and businesslike. He was inclined to doubt whether the part of Eva in "Die Meistersinger," the most important role with which she was to be entrusted at the

Wagner festival, was adapted to her voice.

That same day Gerber called off all his engagements for the week end and disappeared, with vague accounts of his plans, until the following Tuesday. It was silly and evil-minded of Nadine to hint that he had gone away with Paula, but Nancy was very glad to see him again, and pleased when he took her hands and pressed them against his forehead and his eyes, after a graceful fashion of his own, and whispered:

"Little friend, I have thought a great deal about thee."

It was only a fair exchange, if Nancy was thinking a great deal about Gerber. But she was not thinking at all, as she pillowed her golden head on her bare, folded arms, and leaned back in her chair, tilting her face into the lamplight and closing her eyes; she was dreaming. There was a smile of conscious power on her lips, and there was a world of unconscious power, sleeping strength and untried sensation in the vigorous young body that rested now so quietly against the worn cushions of the chair.

Perhaps it was in unconscious tribute to the beauty of the picture that the girl who had come softly up the stairs stood hesitating a moment in the doorway, before she came to Nancy and dropped down on the floor at her feet and hid her distorted, tear-stained face on Nancy's knees.

"You don't care," she said—"nobody cares in the world; but let me tell you. I have got to tell somebody. Teddy—Teddy"—she choked and clutched at Nancy's hands and gripped them—"Teddy has got his divorce."

Nancy pushed back the straight disheveled brown hair from the moist forehead.

"Alice, let me get you some water. Stop crying. You will make yourself ill," she urged, struggling with an unreasoning wave of dislike for the pitiful, huddled bit of humanity at her feet. "What is it? What has your brother done?"

Alice Ogelthorpe stared up at her, dully surprised.

"My brother? Do you mean you

don't know? Nadine knew. She guessed the first time she saw him. I thought you were very considerate never to speak to me about it. He's not my brother. What a fool you must be, if you don't know!"

Alice buried her face on Nancy's knees again.

"Oh, my dear," she sobbed, "what else have I got to live for? What else? Do you think I don't know that I can't sing? Teddy got his divorce a month ago, and he was afraid to tell me. He was afraid, because he does not want to marry me."

XI

"WHAT are we doing today, my dear Marion?"

"Whatever you like, my dear Duane."

Mrs. Elliot, very blonde, very slim, very trig in her short corduroy skirt and her sheer, semi-tailored blouse, sat companionably down on the top step of the bungalow porch beside him, and smiled upon her husband.

What they were to do that day they had done every day for a week; there was just one occupation open to them, whether it was disguised as a tramp through the woods, touched here and there already with the colors that marked the turn of the year, canoeing, shooting or double dummy bridge till her head ached—the occupation of being bored.

Relaxing from the excitement of the intrepid social campaigning that captured him, she had been more or less bored ever since she married Duane, but four weeks alone with him at their shooting lodge threatened unimagined possibilities of gloom.

"To shut me up for four weeks in that barn of a place, that I have never set eyes on since my honeymoon, and never want to see again of course, Lucia dear!" she had complained to Lucia Knowles. "Think of the Adirondacks in August! Why couldn't he wait a month? The Terrys would be at Idlerest then, and Joe Terry is a dear boy, and so amusing when he tries to make love. Why

couldn't Duane have waited a week, and then you and I would have been safely established at Bellemere, before his telegram came. My red bathing suit is a dream, especially since Marie lowered the neck line. That half-low neck is neither one thing nor the other. I can't take Marie with me. I don't even need a maid up there. I do so hate to shoot things. I hate the sound of a gun, because I am such a coward, dear."

Duane's wife, however, was very far from being a coward. She was a vain and ambitious woman, but she was a brave woman and a good sport, for, though she had married him without love, as he very soon found out, she performed her part of the bargain as patiently and graciously as a very gracious and pretty gentlewoman could, and her husband admired her for doing so. He had no patience with women who married for money, and then proceeded to take vengeance upon the world in general and the husband in the case in particular for what they had done of their own free will.

He respected his wife, and he liked the way she wore her clothes. He was proud of her. That was a good deal to be able to say about a woman, in all due sincerity, after being five years married to her, he considered. But he had nothing to say to her. He was sorry already that he had yielded to a helpless sense of the need of a woman's mothering presence and brought her here, instead of facing the last months of his convalescence alone.

For Duane, blessing the tact that induced Marion to excuse herself on the plea that she had letters to write, strolling off empty-handed into the woods alone, light of step, clear of eye, lean and sinewy in his corduroys, was not a well man, but a convalescent man. He was curing himself of his interest in Nancy.

Duane was a good loser. A good loser does not underestimate his loss; he estimates it correctly, and recovers it.

"I have never felt like this before," he said to himself, turning away for the last time from the door of her *pension*, and repressing an inclination to force his way upstairs, past the stocky, slatternly

maid who seemed to doubt his sanity—upstairs to the room where Nancy was watching him from her window.

"I have never felt like this." It was not a complaint; it was a simple statement of fact. Having recognized the fact, he acted upon it. He prescribed a cure for himself as carefully as he would have prescribed for a girl in the grip of her first imprudent love affair.

First he took himself cruising, only to decide that change of scene, the old-fashioned cure, was not effective. Long days on the water give you too much time to think. When the long nights are not sleepless, you dream.

His month at Muldare's was an improvement upon cruising. Duane did not confide to the big Irishman in whose autocratic hands he had placed himself his new theory, that if you put yourself into perfect physical condition, you will have no unruly nerves for a woman to play upon. He described himself vaguely as worn out with business cares, and Muldare, who never asked inconvenient questions of anybody, and owed half the reputation of his place to that virtue of his, and only the remaining half to the fact that he was a good trainer, tired Duane out every day, and rested him every night, and made a new, clear-colored, long-winded man of him.

The new man, as became a healthy creature, had insistent appetites. He wanted his dinner at seven and his lunch at one, and a great deal of both. He wanted ten hours' sleep every night. And whatever he wanted his entire system clamored for with a hunger that was not to be denied, a craving that he thought he had left behind with his boyhood. And this became peculiarly uncomfortable when it happened to enter the new man's head that he wanted to see Nancy.

But this happened now only at rare intervals.

"Your little protégée, Miss Farren, seems to be owning Munich," his wife had said the night before, with some musical review in her hand.

His wife, or anyone else, might mention Nancy's name quite freely for all he cared, thought Duane, turning back to-

ward the house. He would have Stuyvesant up by and by for some real shooting. He would go and find something to eat now, and something to drink, for it was still an hour until lunch time. After lunch, Marion should read French to him in her monotonous, pleasantly modulated voice, and he would go to sleep while she was reading.

Marion came to meet him, waving an open letter, which she slipped into his hand. She had always kept up a graceful pretense of sharing her secrets with him.

"Just look, dear," she said; "the Terrys will be here next week, and Lucia Knowles is coming with them. I have just that one little marquisette, and not another tub gown with me. How stupid I was! If you brought me up here oftener, I should know better what clothes I need here."

She slipped a friendly hand through his arm.

"I can't help being sorry they are coming," she said. "It has been charming to have you all to myself for a week. I feel such good friends with you, dear."

Marion's cheeks were faintly pink, and her eyes were sparkling. She looked remarkably cheerful for a devoted wife interrupted in her second honeymoon. But Duane had no attention to spare just now for his wife's inconsistencies. He reached out an eager hand for the little pile of unopened mail.

"I see a foreign postmark. That letter looks interesting. What is it? May I read it? I am going to read it anyway, so you had better say yes," teased Marion, with her pretty air of a spoiled and petted wife, which she did not often practise upon Duane unless there was a third person about to be impressed by it.

"Surely, if you wish to read it," Duane said.

She considered the question, looking up rather searchingly into his face.

"Then if you say I may read it, I do not wish to. It can't be important. I'll go and see about lunch. That is really important. There was something awfully queer about the coffee this morning. I hope you did not notice it.

If you would like a highball, I'll send it out to you here; shall I?"

Had she recognized the handwriting on the envelope? Had she given him that bad moment deliberately? Was she jealous? If Duane had been in love with Marion, he would often have fretted himself with wondering what the real woman thought and felt beneath the faultless mask of grave and courteous reserve. But Duane had never awakened the real woman. Marion had no sex, he thought.

Duane did not open his letter at once. But it was not the yellowing sweep of trees that distracted his eyes from it. He no longer felt much interest in the view from his porch, of which he had been rather proud a few minutes before.

Counting his own letters to her, enclosed in a second envelope unopened and returned to him, as communications from her, and starting his calculation with the last of these which he had received, Duane reckoned that it was just four months since he had heard from her. The new letter read:

I want to see you. I need you.

NANCY.

XII

"You are a fairy princess in white—Undine, who had no soul, you know; but a soul was born in her."

"Would you love me better if I grew a soul, Fritz?" asked Nancy absently.

"I could not."

He caught her hand and kissed it, holding it firmly and gently, not with the flabby clutch of a month ago. Fritz was growing up. Under whose direction? Fritz, with his face of a Galahad, was growing up. His sunny, exquisitely kept room looked peaceful and safe to Nancy. She would have liked to hide herself away in some corner of it today and watch the sturdy swing of his healthy body and his rapt, serious look as he played.

"Fritz, would you like to marry me?" said Nancy. "Very soon? This week? Today?"

"What do you mean?" Fritz looked frightened and grieved and angry. It

was the fright that predominated. "My heart is yours, and you laugh at me."

"Your heart is the property of somebody you probably don't yet know," said Nancy gently. "I am not sure that I do not envy her. Never make love to her on a stair landing, dear."

Nancy was on her way to the theater, where she had left a music score. She did not want to see Gerber. That was reason enough for staying away from her lesson. She would not shut herself up in her room and pretend to have a headache, as she was tempted to do. She would get the forgotten score. It belonged to Alice, who needed it. Nancy was accountable to nobody. It was her own affair if she did not choose to see Gerber. She was not ready yet for a scene that was before her. She had a dread of unrehearsed scenes.

Nancy wondered if she should ever hear the end of Alice's story. The morning after Nancy had sat by her bed until long after midnight, listening to the sobs that quieted gradually and gave place to steady breathing, because she had promised the hysterical girl that she would not leave her until she was asleep. Alice had become her old, reserved self again. She had made Nancy no more confidences; she had avoided her. Nancy respected her for it. Alice was a sane woman and an independent woman, thinking out her problem without help from anybody. But what an ugly problem it was! What an unnecessary problem! Nancy would not be sorry for Alice.

Nancy found the stage just as it had been left after a rehearsal of "Lohengrin." The king's great gilt chair, impressive enough with its carved lions and coat of arms, was flanked by a wooden stool which Ortrud had occupied. Piled with a jumble of miscellaneous draperies, the peculiarly hard and narrow little divan, pushed into a corner out of the way, looked less than ever like what it was intended to represent, Elsa's nuptial couch.

The theater had never had the lure of an undiscovered country for Nancy. The day Gerber made the ordeal of the first rehearsal of "Rheingold" easy for

her by a casual word of introduction here and there, and took himself away before his watchful eyes could embarrass her in her attempts to make friends with the little group of strangers who were to be her intimate associates for the next two months, Nancy saw on the stage of the Prinz-Regenten just what she was always to see behind the scenes, a crowded, dirty place, full of uninteresting people, who were civil to her.

But the stage and the big dusky auditorium were empty today.

"It is as still as a church," said Nancy, grateful for the dim light and the silence, and glad to be alone.

She found her score, rather crumpled, in a corner, rather grimy with a dusting of ashes from a cigarette which Andreas Berger had hastily disposed of. From fat Berger to the *première danseuse*, a soft-eyed brunette with demure parted hair, everybody smoked occasionally at rehearsals. It was an understood thing, but it was also forbidden, so it was done with a kind of elaborate secrecy.

Berger had passed many moments of intense discomfort in the straight-backed throne chair, but a throne chair is comfortable enough, if you do not try to look like a king when you sit in it, but fit yourself into it at exactly the right angle and cross your knees, as Nancy did. The carved lions grinned at her approvingly, though the immaculate daintiness of her gown brought out all the dinginess of the tarnished gilding behind it.

Most of her new friends approved of Nancy. She dressed like an ingénue, and did not talk like one, so the women did not snub her, as they might have done if she had tried to outdress them, and the men liked her because she was not easily shocked. And though she was to sing *Eva*, a part which nobody but Gerber could have secured for her, they were not jealous of her.

It would have been a futile proceeding, like envying a crown princess her hereditary right to the throne, to be jealous of Nancy. She *was* a princess in the queer little realm she had entered, where the laws of succession are as relentless as they are difficult to trace,

this girl in white, in the corner of the big chair.

The man who saw this clearly, now that all her critics were more or less conscious of it, and who had seen it just as clearly when he was her only critic, stood watching Nancy now from the wings.

- If you ask an inexperienced model to keep some careless pose which she has taken, though she does not move hand or foot, though the pose looks as plastic as ever, the life goes out of it. This is an interesting phenomenon to watch, because the change is so hard to trace. Nancy heard a light, quick step that she knew behind her. Her throat contracted. Her hand on the arm of the chair tightened and relaxed deliberately. She seemed to be holding herself still in the chair.

"How did you know I was here?" she said.

"How should I know?"

Nancy's eyes narrowed dangerously as she looked up at Gerber.

"I ran away from you," she said.

"I am perfectly willing to admit it, even though you don't choose to admit that you followed me here. I did not quite feel up to spending this morning singing scales for you. I have an emotional hangover this morning, Otto."

Gerber sat down on the carved arm of the throne chair, and Nancy slipped a hand into his and leaned back against his shoulder. They made a graceful picture together in the great carved chair of the kings of Brabant; a peaceful picture, if you did not happen to observe the gathering storm in Nancy's eyes. There was no answering danger signal in Gerber's face, but Gerber was older at the game he was playing than Nancy.

"Poor child—one sees that you have slept little. I, too, did not sleep last night."

"That is not true," thought Nancy, but she did not contradict it. She closed her eyes. She had not known how strained and tense her whole body was until she felt it relax at the touch of his lips on her hair.

"Last night, what was it, that you should regret it for yourself, or grudge it to me? A memory for me to keep after

you have forgotten me. Already a memory." He lifted her hand and gravely inspected it, slipping a finger along the curve of the arm. "The pretty thing," he said, "perfect, like a vase or a statue, not like flesh and blood. You see? You are quite safe with me. I am an old man today."

Nancy let the beautiful, caressing voice talk on without interrupting it. She reached for his hand and pressed it against her closed eyes. The human relations were simple. There was so little beauty in the world that it was wise to grasp all you could and throw none of it away. This was part of Gerber's favorite set of platitudes, convincing and smooth, worn smooth by frequent use before ever he began to repeat them to Nancy. She knew them all now. She could supply the lapse for herself, if she went to sleep now, soothed by the measured touch of his hand on her hair.

But she was not going to sleep. She was going to lie still and rest, with his arm around her, gathering strength from the touch of it, and courage for what she wanted to say. How curious that this was what she needed to give her courage, his arm around her and his face close to her hair! But she needed more than courage. She could not begin what she had to say without some cue from Gerber, the cue that was coming now.

"All this is very beautiful, very wonderful. When I am a lonely old man—"

The caressing voice scarcely paused. It was only for the fraction of a second that a calculating gleam showed in Gerber's eyes. Gently, abstractedly, as if he were keeping to his familiar platitudes, he said:

"The lonely old man will miss you next year when you are in Paris, my child."

He let a minute or two of silence emphasize the news. Nancy's head slipped lower and rested on his knees. She gave no sign that she had heard him.

"I have talked to Gaspard. He is your good friend, and so am I, although I am selfish. It is not easy for a selfish old man to lose his most promising pupil a year before there is need. But there are openings, possibilities, other men

who can give as much as I. I must not keep you here to make memories for me."

Gerber looked down, puzzled, at the motionless head on his knees, and threw a shade more feeling into his fatherly voice.

"So we have not so many more mornings together, you and I. You are sorry that you ran away, *fräulein*?"

It looked very forlorn, very dejected, the motionless, bowed head, but Gerber was not accustomed to women who received unexpected shocks in silence. They disconcerted him.

"You are sorry?" he repeated sharply in English.

"You lose, Otto," said Nancy, turning a smiling face to Gerber.

"What do you mean?"

"You want to know what you lose? You lose—me."

Quite composed, quite grave, white-robed like any well dressed accusing angel, she stood up to pronounce sentence upon him; but there was nothing angelic about her laughing eyes.

"You have no intention of letting me go to Paris next year. When you made the suggestion, you expected me to cling to you and weep and beg you to let me stay. You know a lot about women, but you have a good deal yet to learn about me, and one or two things to learn about yourself. You want a hold on me because you know I am going to make good. You make love to me to tighten your hold on me. You try to make me do it all, because you're a coward. You have never discussed my future with Gaspard."

"How do you know?"

"Because I have."

"With Gaspard?"

There was a flicker of jealousy in his eyes, for an instant only, but Nancy had seen it.

"That's better," she said. "You might as well show me you're human. I know it well enough. You want to know whether I have let Gaspard make love to me. No, I have not. I don't like the man. I don't want to accept his introduction to Benet. I don't want him to get me small parts to sing at the

Comédie. But he is willing to. I shall let him start me in Paris—if you won't, Otto."

An inherited sense of shame that was no part of her sent a sudden flush to her cheeks.

"Otto, I hate to talk, but when I do talk, I want to talk straight," said Nancy. "We love each other. I'll have to go away."

"You are letting personal vanity interfere with your career." Gerber managed to speak with his usual composure. "Benet—"

"I let nothing interfere with it. That is why I am going. Benet is inferior to you, but you have made me. Now that I am made, I can afford to study with an inferior man. There is just one thing I can't afford, Otto—to go on loving you."

Very tender, very womanly, altogether desirable, she watched the color that crept painfully into his cheeks. It was the only sign that she hurt him, this mantling red which he could not control.

"I am sorry," said Nancy softly. "Don't be too angry, Otto. I'm sorry, too."

"You have become a very great prude of a sudden."

The thin lips sneered. Could nothing break through that disdainful calm of his? Petty argument, teasing questions were wearing away her self-control. Was there no end to his? If she should strike him, would he go on smiling that calm smile at her?

"You know better," said Nancy patiently. "Little loves are all very well. It is a great love that is dangerous to me. Great love would interfere with my work. It would make me into a new woman. I cannot lose myself in an unselfish love. I cannot afford to. I have got to be selfish, Otto. Will you arrange for me to leave you?"

"Dear child, you mistake. You exaggerate. You interest me greatly. You attract me, even. But others before you—others—"

His incoherent voice died away.

Had the thin lips always been so sensual? His eyes looked calm because they were cruel eyes.

"What a hypocrite you are!" said Nancy, with infinite tenderness. "I am tired of hearing you tell lies. I want you to tell me the truth. Come here, Otto."

The last remnant of her strength of will gathered itself together and commanded him out of her glowing eyes.

"You love me. Say it, Otto."

"No."

She was standing very still. In the white figure, in the face so close to his own, there was nothing alive but the radiant, glowing eyes. In the whole hushed place where they stood, in the whole world, there was nothing real except Nancy's eyes.

"No."

Would the eyes waver now? Would they lower and release his eyes?

He tried to speak, and could not. He put out his arms and caught her close in a rough clasp. It hurt her. Laughing, she folded her hands behind his head to prolong their kiss.

"My darling," she whispered, "our love is the big thing, for both of us. We are cowards to give it up. But we are going to give it up. You don't need to say it. I'll say it for you. You love me. And I love you—I love you—I love you!"

XIII

You cannot always get a letter into the hands you intend it for by writing your correspondent's name on an envelope and dropping it into the post. You have an opportunity to observe the frame of mind of the person you talk to, and you can modify your conversation accordingly, but you have to guess at the frame of mind of the person you write to, and if you are a woman and your correspondent is a man, you have just one chance out of ten to guess right.

Nine times out of ten, your sprightly, provocative account of midsummer flirtations will fall under the unsympathetic eyes of a heat-jaded city dweller. A man you would hardly recognize as the man you know, a man who never thinks about you, a man you have never met, will find your unwelcome love letter in

his office mail, and put it into his pocket unread and forget it is there, nine times out of ten—but the tenth chance is worth taking.

Duane did not cable an assurance of undying devotion to Nancy in reply to her letter; it came a week too late for that. But it came a week too soon for him to ignore it entirely. He could not pronounce himself free from his obsession yet. If he could see the girl without losing his head about her, he would have proved that he was cured. His afternoon tramp took him, without conscious choice of his own, to the village, where he got his secretary on the long distance telephone, and asked him to see about reservations on the *Plutonic*. This great new liner was a five-day boat, and Duane was in a hurry, as he admitted to himself—in a hurry to get Nancy off his mind, off his nerves, out of his head, forever.

Nobody he knew, nobody who was even worth the trouble of avoiding, was crossing in August, but Duane was not lonely. He was not even bored. There was pleasure and profit in losing money at auction bridge to a pair of professional gamblers who gave him some new points in the game that would have been worth buying at any price. There was pleasure and pain, the reproach of his own unworthiness impressed upon him in a wholesome way, in a flirtation with a sweet girl graduate, who renounced him scornfully the moonlit night when he first mentioned his wife to her, and forgave him the next morning and showed him pictures of her fiancé. There was pleasure in the simple pastime of juggling with railway guides and time tables, and counting the hours before he should be in Munich. If the joy of life revived with such uncanny rapidity merely because he was on his way to Nancy, how well the world would look when he had seen her and said good-bye to her!

A brief interview would be enough. His first sight of the real Nancy would put out of his head the Nancy he had invented, the enchanting, bewildering dream Nancy with whom he had thought himself in love.

Duane meant to be very kind to the real Nancy, get her out of debt, get her out of whatever difficulty had induced her to send for him. Any money she might ask him for was hers by right, as a thank offering for helping him to complete his cure.

Morning light, Duane decided, is the appropriate light to be disenchanted in. He could not hope to be greeted by a slattern in curl papers. But at least he could trust himself not to be sentimental in the morning. It insured him a good night's rest to have his cure at hand, to be safe in the town with Nancy.

His waiter at the Bayrischer Hof had forgotten him. It was an impractical country, this, where big tips were so soon forgotten. The reflection spoiled his dinner. After dinner, habit pulled him in various directions—to the florist's, to the telephone booth, directly to the Pension Stella. In self-defense, he inquired about other possibilities for the evening. He learned that it was too late for him to get seats for that evening's performance at the Prinz-Regenten Theater. This naturally determined him to get a seat and after that, as a natural but not very enjoyable result, to occupy it.

He was just in time to see the curtain go up on the second act of "Die Meistersinger."

Duane's friends liked their grand opera very heavy and their light opera very light. If they wanted to laugh, they went to a musical comedy, not to a performance of Wagner. This was not among the operas which he had whispered through in the back of his wife's box or welcomed as a period of calm in a day crowded with more strenuous engagements.

Fifteen years it must be since he had heard it. The haunting tenderness and laughter of the music were unchanged. Hans Sachs, Duane was pleased to note, was still impersonated by a fattish man, with a golden voice that made it sacrilege for you to observe his figure. Duane closed his eyes, and could almost believe that he was listening to Ricard's golden voice again. Almost! What was it he missed—some touch of inspiration, a

beauty beyond mere beauty of tone, white magic, the stuff that dreams are made of?

Where was Ricard? His battered, glorious voice had sung itself to pieces in Wagner roles on the stage of the Metropolitan years ago. And where was the boy who worshiped Ricard and Wagner and other gods that Duane had forsaken, the boy with impossible ideals and futile ambitions, the boy who had thought it his duty to release his fiancée because he was no longer fit for her the first time he committed the unpardonable offense of getting drunk? Where was he now, the boy Duane used to be?

The music was calling the boy, the dream-laden, enchanted music, calling the boy or someone else, something else. What was it? The music was insistent and unsatisfied, like youth itself, with a hunger too divine to satisfy, a hunger that will pass too soon of itself unsatisfied. Youth; and the girl who had come quietly upon the half-dark stage was the heart of youth.

A faithful impersonation, free from conventional stage tricks; a clever woman, making a comparatively unimportant part stand out without over-acting it; these were things to be said next day, when you were asked why the performance of "Die Meistersinger" was the most brilliant of the series. With the girl before your eyes, you formulated no criticisms; you looked at her.

In place of a prima donna coquetting uncomfortably through an ingénue part, here was something new and wonderful: neither prima donna nor ingénue, but a girl, a girl who was beautiful and did not know it. She was puzzled and worried, you saw, but that was not the important thing about her; she was puzzled and worried, but she was sweet and young. You could have written the prize song yourself, as her lover did, you could have written the whole opera yourself, if only you could have looked long enough at Eva.

She came shyly forward, and after a fluttering look upward through downcast lids, began to sing. The clear voice had no soul in it, but it was exquisitely pure and true, ready to thrill with feeling

when the soul woke, almost cruel now in its purity, the voice of youth, Eva's voice, to everyone in the audience but Duane.

Duane was jealous of Eva, jealous of the opera, jealous of the clear voice itself, a thing of cool, high places that he could not reach or look into. Through Eva's shy lashes, brown eyes he knew had looked at him, dauntless eyes, infinitely lonely eyes. The boy he used to be might go and hide himself in his silly, blundering past, for all Duane cared now, and never emerge again. The opera was a meaningless waste of sound, a long mummery that separated him from her. How many more acts had he to sit through before he could see Nancy?

The second act was over at last, and she was taking her curtain calls, poised and gracious, taller than she looked when she had lost her own personality in Eva's. Was this the woman he had expected to ask him for money? What could she want of him? The flowers and the applause might be part of the prima donna's traditional reception, and no compliment to Nancy, but they did such things better over here somehow; or was it the slender grace of the bowing figure itself that conveyed the impression that the custom of bestowing unwieldy wreaths upon ladies who could not carry them had been invented for Nancy? But it was not by flowers or applause that Duane gauged her success. It was by a sign he knew the value of better, the little expectant rustle that ran through the audience at the next entrance of Eva.

Through the concluding acts it puzzled Duane and tormented him that the girl on the stage was like Nancy; he watched for a familiar gesture, for one of the sidelong looks he remembered. It came, but it was not Nancy who looked; it was Eva. The look was quite free from coquetry, disconcerting no longer, but disarming and innocent. He might have been looking at some good little sister of Nancy's, who resembled her just enough to make him miss her unendurably.

The good little sister would vanish when the curtain fell, but would Nancy come back? Nancy as he remembered

her could not have impersonated a very young girl convincingly. She was herself too young. She lacked the maturity, the perspective, that are needed to impersonate youth. If no woman can play Juliet until she is too old to live it, that is doubly true of Eva. How could Nancy sing that part? What had changed her in a month or two? Would they never let her go, so that he could get face to face with her and find out what had happened to Nancy?

The last act was over. She came and went and bowed and smiled as graciously as if each recall had been the first, long after Duane had lost count of them. Her face was the one thing he saw clearly in a nightmare of grinning faces and unwieldy masses of flowers. But at last the ovation at the end of the opera was over, and people were elbowing their way out past him. He could wake up from his nightmare and look for Nancy.

He asked for directions from an usher, who appeared amused by his German and distrustful of his motives. He was glad. He wanted an argument with somebody. He rather hoped to have trouble in getting behind the scenes; but he was not to have it.

"You do not remember me?" said a vaguely familiar voice. "It is Kessler."

"Fritz Kessler; the Hofgarten four months ago," said Duane, remembering. "Miss Farren—"

"She wants to see you." The tall young man ignored the hand Duane held out. His handsome eyes looked sulky.

"Will you come this way? She did not notice you in the audience; it was I who saw you and told her you were here." This fact seemed to give him pleasure. "But she asked to see you. She sent me for you."

Duane's guide had nothing more to say to him. As the two men made their way through the crowd, Duane caught a glimpse of a white head and a cameo profile, and lost sight of it at once, and was glad. He felt an unaccountable reluctance to speak to Gerber.

"If you will wait?" Fritz left him alone behind the scenes for five minutes, half an hour, Duane did not know which,

but it was interminable, whatever it was; and there was a crowd here, too, a bustling confusion that he was glad to be rescued from when Fritz came back, more sulky and good-looking than ever, and beckoned to him.

"This is her door. Where are you going, Anna?"

"The *fräulein* sent me with a message. She will see this gentleman now, at once. Be pleased to go in."

"What message? To whom?"

Fritz and the red-faced, high-shouldered woman who had come out of Nancy's dressing room disappeared together, arguing hotly as they went. Duane knocked with trembling fingers, and opened the door.

There was a woman sitting at the littered toilet table, a tall woman, in a long, soft white negligée. Her face was turned from him. Her figure was hidden in the soft white folds. Duane shut the door, so gently that he made no noise.

"It's you. It's been so long—so long," he said. His voice sounded muffled and unreal. The white figure across the little room was miles away. To bring it nearer, there was something he wanted to say, something he had wanted to say for a long time.

She got up and stood waiting. Her eyes looked tired. Her hair was not so bright as he remembered it. His hand went out to the soft, tumbled waves of her hair. At the touch of it he found the words he wanted. He said them with her head on his shoulder, holding her gently in his arms.

"I should have come if you had not sent for me. I could not have stayed away. You are the bravest woman I ever knew. You are the only thing I want in the world. I've got to have you. I've got to make sure of you. You've got to marry me."

XIV

THE stairs were dark, and they seemed long to Nancy, like the ill-omened stairways in dreams, that lengthen out step by step above you until it develops—

a portent grotesquely terrifying—that they had no end. Long, and steeper than they have ever been before, but she climbed them straight and sure-footed, as you walk in dreams, though her body felt lifeless and tired, a heavy weight, that she carried unwillingly up the stairs.

Fritz had made a fire in her room. Tonight for the first time there was a chill of fall in the air. In his room next door she could hear Fritz moving about, but he was not whistling or singing. Nancy was sorry. She slipped inside her room, and closed the door and locked it.

A lamp was burning. The light stung her eyes. She blew out the lamp, and taking off her hat, but with her short coat still buttoned about her, she threw herself down on the couch. The pillows hurt her. She pushed them out of her way to the floor, and lay face down on the couch and pressed her hands over her eyes. Her head did not ache, but bright waves of crimson color went shifting and dancing before her eyes.

Nancy's tired brain recalled to her a certain day in the hot sun, when she had played at helping the masons to repair a chimney of the old house at Farrenville, the summer she was ten. Late June it was, and hot, and they had put her to bed that night so tired that she had seen dancing before her eyes all night shifting waves of hot, vivid color, unchanging fiery red.

"Heart's beloved!"

Fritz, outside her door, was calling her. Nancy's hands were cold. She would have liked to feel his soft, fine hair under her hands.

"I have brought you some cakes for your tea. I love you better than anyone in the world."

"Go away, dear."

Nancy's voice sounded hollow and strained; but if you have a ball of fire in your throat and cannot swallow it, it is difficult, Nancy thought, to speak at all.

"They are macaroons."

Fritz was not protesting. Whatever Nancy asked of him, he did not protest. He would now go back to his room and

sit patiently listening for some sound from her. He would come and kneel with his ear against the blue door and listen. Kneeling there, and later, after he had kissed his hand to the blue door for good-bye, a little procession of questions would go on following each other through his mind, undisturbed by any diversion he found for the evening. Was Nancy ill? Was she asleep? Would he ever see her again? If you are sufficiently young, and sufficiently in love, this is never a ridiculous question to you; even after the hour is set, it is probable that fate is conspiring to prevent that miracle, your next meeting with Her. Would he ever see Nancy again?

She was asleep. She had fallen asleep before Fritz's fire went out. Nobody answered when Frau Steinmann knocked at Nancy's door with a tray in her hand, and knocked again, and went noisily away down the stairs.

Nancy lay with her left arm thrown over her head and her cheek pressed into the curve of her arm, just as Adam Farren used to find her at night the year her mother died, when he used to steal into her nursery and tuck her into bed, clumsily, but, because he was ashamed of such a display of sentiment and did not wish to wake her, so gently that Nancy never knew he came.

It was just such a dreamless sleep that Nancy was sleeping now. No troubled dreams roused her to lie wide-eyed, fretting her brain with feverish plans. She would recover her grip on life, this tired child, who breathed softly and smiled as she slept. She would make what she chose of her life, with the strength of her hands and the strength of her brain. But now her hold had slipped. It was to tighten her hold, to change the situation somehow, to get a new deal because she could not play the cards she held, that she had sent for Duane.

He would change things, somehow, anyhow—she was too tired of thinking and planning to care how; that had been all she asked of him when she sent for him. His unconditional surrender had been more than she asked, a proof of her complete power over him, a proof of the power over men and over herself,

which she would recover some day, though she had lost it now. Duane did not know yet that he had come too late.

When Nancy woke it was cold in her room, and she could hear Fritz no longer; she lay still and stared into the dark for one dull moment of fear. Her hands shook as she groped for the lamp and lighted it. For it might have been a long time that she had slept. Must she wait until tomorrow—must she live through another day before she did what she meant to do?

Dining the night before with Duane, whose face across the table looked like a stranger's; walking alone in a drizzle of rain today, today, yesterday or hundreds of years before she had been born, this decision had been made. She was tired of struggling against it. It was only wasting strength, only wasting time.

Fritz's clock began to strike, and she counted the strokes, to ten. She would go tonight.

Even by the flickering lamplight, the roses on the walls looked faded. She was sorry that they had faded so quickly. She would have liked to leave the room tonight just as she had seen it first. She moved slowly about the room, closing the piano, piling up the music scores, rearranging the couch pillows. In a corner of the scarlet cushion that topped the pile, Fritz had burned a hole with a forgotten cigarette the night he hid his face in her lap and threatened to shoot himself. Nancy laid her cheek against the scarlet cushion and laughed softly.

She looked long at her face in the mirror. The eyes were glowing, and the cheeks were soft pink from her sleep. At either side of her mouth the lines had deepened faintly but unmistakably in the last month. She could see tonight what she had watched for morning and night in her face, the first foreshadowing of age upon her youth. When her hair began to turn white she would dye it, she thought. Red hair was ugly turning white, grisly and without dignity.

She put on her hat, and found her yellow scarf on a hook underneath a gown in the wardrobe and twisted it round her throat. It would be colder outside.

She opened the window and lowered the green shade, to shut out the morning sun, as the girl who had slept in this room for nearly a year had done every night. Mechanically, as if it were part of the arrangements she was making for this girl's convenience, this girl who seemed no longer part of herself, Nancy picked up Duane Elliot's picture, and without glancing at it, tore it lengthwise and across and threw it into the stove on top of the dead ashes.

The lamp was smoking. She turned it low. It would burn out by and by. She wanted to leave it burning. She did not want to grope her way out of an unlighted room. Closing the creaking door of her room behind her, Nancy went down the stairs and out of the silent house.

It was starlight. There was no moon. A light wind tempered the cold. Nancy breathed deep, and her eyes cleared at the touch of the wind, but she felt dizzy and weak. A belated cab was passing. She hailed it and got in.

It was only her body that was tired. Her brain was feverishly awake, though it thought of such trivial things: whether she had money enough for the cabman in the gold-linked wristbag that had been her Christmas present from Duane; whether she had looked a suspicious figure to him, or only a shabby, forlorn thing in her crushed clothes and muffling scarf.

The latch of the door had failed to catch when the cabman slammed it. It was a distinct effort to move and reach for the knob. It was the cold perhaps that made her so drowsy. She felt at peace with the world. Whatever regret, whatever revolt was before her tomorrow, she was at peace tonight.

"You want to get out here?"

"Yes."

The little drive was over. Before a low house, dark except for a red-shaded lamp in an upper room and a dim light in the entrance hall, the cab had stopped.

The cab had drawn up noisily, with an aggressive clatter and rattle that the girl was not conscious of. But two men in the house were awake, and they had heard it; the man who waited beside the

red-shaded lamp upstairs, and his servant, who threw open the door, so that the light from the narrow hall behind him shone into Nancy's face.

The wind caught her long, light scarf and wrapped it close around her, and plucked it loose and flung it across her breast. The scarf seemed to caress her and to point at her, like a hand that gloated over the gracious lines of her, erect and ample and young. Her flushed face was upturned, and her eyes, dark and dilated, looked up at the window above her, up at the room where the red-shaded lamp was burning. She was smiling her faint, crooked smile, the only

look that touched her face with age. For once, the one time in her life which is permitted to every woman, though it is a condition of the gift that she must possess it unknown to herself, Nancy Farren was absolutely beautiful as she stood on the steps of Otto Gerber's house.

"Johann, let me in. Your master—" As she said it, she knew that it was true, that it had been true ever since she made her formal good-byes to him the day before—true ever since his hand had first taken her own into its firm, light clasp. Why had she resisted so long?

"Your master is expecting me."



DAPHNE

By Charles S. Gerlach

I MADE a wreath for Daphne once
Of fairest flowers that I could find.
I gathered lilies calm and white,
To match the brow they were to bind;
I gathered violets for her eyes,
And fair pale jasmine for her grace;
I gathered roses, red and white,
To match the beauty of her face—

Then thought my garland was complete
And passing fair—till Daphne came.
She wreathed my flowers about her face,
And lo, she put them all to shame!
Yet not for very beauty's sake,
They might be fairest all the while,
But never yet has bloomed on earth
A flower so sweet as Daphné's smile.



EVERY romance a woman has leaves her less romantic.

THIS LIFE WE LEAD

By Lewis Allen Browne

LIFE consists of only two things—wishing you hadn't if you did, and wishing you had if you didn't.

The man who always tells what a fool he used to be has got the tense wrong.

A woman's sword is her tongue, but nature forgot to provide a scabbard.

The likelihood of being found out frightens many women, but men are more worried over the possibility of being sued.

It takes a glass of flattery to wash down a grain of truth.

Many people think they are rolling in wealth when they are really groveling in it.

There are some men who wouldn't rock a boat or look down a gun barrel, and yet they would start a religious argument.

If everybody lived in glass houses, there'd be no more respect in the world.

No man is successful until he can make more money than his wife wants to spend.

If things don't come your way, get some other way.

The way of the transgressor is hard—on the rest of us.

When a man is henpecked he generally deserves it.

When we get advice we only remember it long enough to give it to someone else.

Man's troubles do not always wear petticoats. Sometimes they are in musical comedy.

We know a man who never lied to his wife—he was a bachelor.

The real hero is the man who is popular at home.

Money talks, but about all it says is "good-bye."

The friends one buys are never worth the price.

A CURE FOR A HEADACHE

By Alice Cowdery

YOUNG Smith had a headache. It was a simple affair. Almost any woman would have accepted it. But young Smith was not used to headaches or any other aches, so he dropped off the car on the way home to his cosy bachelor apartment, and with his hand pressed upon his throbbing brow, entered the Professional Building and sought medical solace. He met Dr. Anderson about to emerge from his office on the sixth floor.

"Just in time, sir," said the doctor. "I'm off for Santa Rosa on a case. What's the trouble?" Young Smith told him of his throbbing brow. Dr. Anderson made a few professional passes.

"Over-eating, over-drinking, over-smoking, over—"

"But my head, now—" implored young Smith piteously.

"This," said the doctor, "if you *must* be coddled," and he wrote him out a prescription. The doctor made a hurried note of the transaction, as he always did with even the simplest cases, jotted down Smith's name and address in his journal and then departed for his train. Young Smith took his prescription and entered the first drug store that happened. It was that of Friable and Squibs, a most unfortunate happening at this particular time, as you will soon perceive.

Friable and Squibs were young and congenial partners. They had graduated from college together; they had served their chemical apprenticeships together; they had combined their patrimonies in conducting the same shop, and, what is most to the present point, however regrettable, they partook of the same blithesome and light-hearted methods of relaxation. Carking care

fled before the singular buoyancy of their temperaments; they could even retain, after ten years, a vivid interest in that jovial organization of their college days, euphoniously known as the Diddle Dees. Fortunately for humanity and trade, the reunions of the Diddle Dees were celebrated at long intervals.

Early dawn of the day on which fate and young Smith's throbbing brow had driven him to their shop had seen the partners wending homeward—not for sleep; sleep was another twelve-hour stage away—but for cooling baths, for fresh and businesslike attire, for coffee, hot and strong. All of which to indicate that, in the scale of alertness and reliability, the firm of Friable and Squibs was decidedly below par.

Fate also would have it that the young gentleman who ordinarily compounded the firm's prescriptions was in need of one himself; in other words, he was ill. It behooved Squibs, as the more competent chemist, in the more normal condition, to fill this delicate post. It was a post not too difficult of fulfillment in the morning during those few hours of accelerated nervous energy frequently experienced after a night of revelry. With the assistance of the errand boy, Squibs performed wonders. Friable, too, though far less coherent, was about the shop all morning, taking stock, refilling bottles, doing many odd jobs; but he did them in so haphazard and mussy a way that Squibs finally turned him out. Friable was due, anyhow, to shed the light of his business acumen upon suburban trade for a couple of days. So he departed, leaving the burden to Squibs.

Squibs shouldered it. So busy and so fussy was Squibs that he omitted lunch,

and then, at three o'clock exactly, his energy departed from him. An insistent, a penetrating languor crept over him. He moved about filling orders, but his soul, so to speak, was not in them. By five he was yawning with violence, with danger; by five thirty he was propping himself up against the counter; at a quarter to six he dismissed the boy and was about to take a long, long something, that he might achieve enough strength to enable him to stagger home to bed, when unfortunately, as we have before remarked, young Smith and his throbbing brow entered.

Young Smith, murmuring, "I'll wait," threw his prescription down upon the counter, threw himself upon a chair, and leaning his brow upon his hands, concentrated upon its throbs, naturally oblivious to the person or the actions of Squibs. Squibs swallowed an awful yawn, and concealing himself in his laboratory, mastered, after a mighty effort, the prescription.

Among other things it called for that digestive soother, sodium. Sodium was on a shelf in the shop among other similar jars, neatly lettered in black on gold, alphabetically placed. On one side of sodium was a jar of salicin, and on the other side of sodium was a jar of strychnine. Of course it should not have been arranged that way. But it was. *Now* Friable and Squibs have brilliant red bands about strychnine, and that sort of thing, with crossbones and grinning skulls prominently affixed.

Squibs turned up his—we regret to state it of a usually attractive young man—turned up his decidedly bleared gaze and located sodium; then another of those devastating yawns possessed him as he reached out for it.

Meanwhile young Smith held his throbbing brow, oblivious to all else.

Squibs reached out for the sodium, took down the jar of strychnine, measured carefully, noting with dreamy pride the steadiness of his well kept hand, measured exactly fifteen grains of the deadly stuff into his scales, left the jar on the counter and made his way lan-

guidly back into the laboratory. There he mixed it with the other ingredients. He then put up the powder into six neat packets, placed them in a dainty gilt and beflowered box, labeled it "Smith—as directed" (*what* Smith, Dr. Anderson in his haste had neglected to state), wrapped it, recovered his intelligence sufficiently to charge for the cost of it one hundred times and enough also to cover the doctor's percentage and handed the box to the unhappy young man—who walked rapidly away with it. Squibs then gave himself a dose of bromo.

As he drank it, he congratulated himself upon a rather successful day, considering the strain he had been under and his beastly sleepiness. As he drank his eye wandered over the counter. It came to rest upon a jar thereon. It fixed itself upon an uncovered jar thereon. It spelt out slowly the letters upon the jar: "STRYCH—" It spelt those letters twice to assure itself that this was no holdoverish phantasmagoria, and then, with difficulty, it detached itself from the jar and sought the shelf above. It rested for a moment on that innocent sodium unmoved in its place.

Squibs took the counter with agile grace and landed with three bounds in the street; but the homeward hurrying throng had long since swallowed the fated and throbbing brow of Smith.

For a moment panic seized upon Squibs and held him motionless. Then he dived upon the prescription file. Smith was the victim's name. There were four columns of Smith in the telephone book. Anderson was his doctor. Anderson's office! Squibs seized the telephone. "Trying to get yer party. Trying to get—" Squibs jumped up and down as he fumbled the book, this time for the doctor's residence. He got it.

"Dr. Anderson," he shouted, "I want—"

"I think you are standing a little too close to the telephone," a low voice replied with a sweet drawl. "I can't quite hear you."

Squibs readjusted himself. "I want Dr. Anderson."

"The Doctor is out of town. . . . What did you say?"

It was only Squibs's groan.

The slow, sweet voice continued. "This is Mrs. Anderson. Can I be of any—"

"Do you know a patient of the Doctor's—young man—name Smith?" stuttered Squibs.

"Smith—Smith," the soft, slow voice replied "Smith—let me see. Smith—there are so *many* Smiths, you know," she laughed in a leisurely manner.

Meanwhile young Smith was on his car and gliding swiftly homeward.

"Woman," cried Squibs, "think quick! I poisoned him—"

"You—"

"By mistake," shouted the frantic Squibs. "I'm a druggist—I want his address—I want to save him—I want—"

"Heavens, how awful! The Doctor may have it at his office."

"How can I get it? Have you a key?" cried Squibs.

"Heavens, how dreadful! No—try the janitor. I'm just going out to dinner. I've a taxi waiting. I'll be down immediately, in case—"

But the receiver of Squibs's telephone was swaying on its cord while he leaped and panted up the street to the Professional Building.

Squibs found the janitor on the sixth floor finishing up for the night.

"Must get into Anderson's room!" Squibs panted without preliminary.

The janitor looked him over carefully.

"I guess he's gone," he said, and took up a broom.

"Of course he's gone," cried Squibs. "There's a man dead—dying—poisoned! I got to get his address—"

The janitor looked at him skeptically and slowly scratched his head.

"Whose address?" he said at last.

Meanwhile young Smith was entering his cosy bachelor apartment.

"Whose address?" repeated the janitor.

"The man's," shouted Squibs.

"I don't know yer," replied the janitor.

"How do *I* know ye're telling the truth? How kin *I* let yer into a office with no proof? How do *I* know—"

"His wife said to—" Squibs pounded at the door. "You're a murderer!" he cried passionately. "Every minute you wait—" Squibs kicked at the door and heaved his shoulders against it.

"Be careful of that there woodwork," said the janitor. "How do I know his wife said so? Where's yer proof—show me that! I bin janitor here—"

"Go to blankety-blank," roared Squibs, "and let me in!"

"I bin janitor here for ten years," continued that official, raising his voice—but Squibs's awful language drowned it. The sodden surfaces of the janitor's eyes were beginning to glow when the elevator ejected an excited woman. She ran toward them.

"You're not in!" she cried to Squibs.

"This," began Squibs, choking and indicating, with waving arms, the janitor—"this—"

"Open my husband's door immediately," said Mrs. Anderson, turning upon the janitor.

"Lady, I bin janitor here—"

Meanwhile young Smith had taken off his coat and shoes, got into a dressing gown and slippers, opened his gilded and beflowered box, selected a neat packet therefrom, pressed his hand to his throbbing brow and gone for a decanter of water.

Squibs seized the janitor by the throat. Mrs. Anderson screamed. At this dramatic and opportune moment the elevator disgorged another—Dr. Baker, her husband's assistant. He stopped in consternation.

"Oh, Dr. Baker!" cried Mrs. Anderson, running to him. "Open the door!"

Squibs dropped the raging janitor and plunged in after the doctor. The journal was open on the table. "J. Smith, Pasmore Apartments," was the last entry, hastily scrawled.

Meanwhile young Smith, in his cosy bachelor apartment, had poured out a

careful measure of water upon the powder. He then sat down in an armchair and—

"You two rush on in my taxi," cried Mrs. Anderson, "and I'll try to reach him by 'phone." Squibs, explaining violently, propelled the doctor on.

"West eight-two-nine," called Mrs. Anderson.

"Hello!"

"Is this Mr. Smith?"

"Yes."

"Thank heavens! Don't take it!" she cried.

"Beg pardon," said young Smith.

"Don't take it," she repeated; "you haven't, have you?"

"Pardon me, madam; you must have the wrong number."

"The powder—headache powder—you haven't taken it, have you?"

"Why, yes," said the astonished Smith, "just this minute. Who is this, anyway?" But he was not answered, for another telephone receiver hung by its cord as a wild-eyed woman hastened onward.

"Strange," muttered young Smith uneasily, as he put up his telephone and sat down again in his chair.

Squibs and the doctor leaped from their taxi, and pushed by the expostulating attendant in the hall of the Pasmore.

"Alive?" they called out to the servant who came running to their tempestuous ring—but they pushed by him, too, as they called out.

Smith started up in amazement as the two strangers burst in upon him.

"Thank God you're alive!" cried Squibs, seizing Smith's hands and shaking them up and down.

"But—" began Smith. He stopped. The doctor's eye was fixed upon him in horror, recoiled from the empty glass on the table—

"You haven't taken it!" the doctor exclaimed.

"You mean the powder?" said Smith with a puzzled frown.

Squibs and the doctor nodded silently.

"I took one just now," said Smith,

"but—" He stopped again and stared open-mouthed at Squibs, for Squibs was acting oddly. Squibs was dancing wildly about the room uttering incoherencies from which at intervals the words "mustard—pump—zinc sulphate—" evolved themselves.

Smith began to pale a bit. A woman now ran into the room. She held out her arms imploringly to Squibs.

"Oh, you're *sure* you made a mistake? Oh, say you're not *sure*!"

"My God—of course I'm *sure*!" groaned Squibs as he danced. "Get mustard—get a pump—get—" The doctor began to give terse directions to the servant in the doorway.

Smith lifted up his voice. "May I ask—"

Simultaneously Squibs and Mrs. Anderson turned upon him and cried:

"Strychnine! You've taken it!" and Squibs began to dance about again.

Strychnine! Smith turned a limp gray. Strychnine! Smith's eyes protruded from his head. Then he staggered, made an ineffectual effort to stand upright, grasped at the air and sank half conscious into his chair. The servant ran in. They lifted Smith to his couch. He began to groan and to writhe horribly.

"I can't stand it, I can't stand it!" moaned Squibs.

"Get busy then," said the doctor, breathing hard. "Get me a pump; get me some zinc sulphate—and get it straight," he called after Squibs sarcastically.

Squibs, haggard and wild, leaped from the taxicab into his shop. A messenger boy got off his wheel and ran in after him.

"Are you Squibs?"

"Yes, yes; don't bother me," moaned the miserable Squibs, and sprang about the shop collecting things.

"I tried to get youse at yer place," continued the lad, "but youse wasn't there and it's marked 'hurry.'"

"Give it here, then," cried Squibs, and leaped with it and his commissions into the taxicab. He opened the telegram; he read; he emitted a shout. The driver turned.

"Go on," yelled Squibs—"faster!"

He read a second time. "Cussed carelessness," he muttered. The message ran:

DEAR SQUIBS:

Don't touch sodium—it's strychnine on top. Strych. is soda on top. Refilled both this morning—mixed them—little mistake. Just had a nap—woke up—remembered. Odd thing—interesting psychologically—tell you more later—hope it's all right.

FRIABLE.

"Cussed carelessness," repeated Squibs sternly.

Squibs rushed on to where Smith lay writhing horribly on the couch, the doctor, the woman and the servant all working over him with moist, drawn faces. He entered waving the glad tidings over his head.

"It's all right! He isn't poisoned!" he cried. "You ain't poisoned," he repeated above Smith's writhing, groaning form.

Smith stopped writhing and lifted his head.

"What's that you say?"

"You ain't poisoned. Little mistake of"—Squibs hesitated a second in thought—"of my partner's. He wasn't well," he added.

"Do you mean to say," insisted Smith, "that I'm *not* poisoned?"

"Not a bit. Congratulations," said Squibs, beaming upon him.

Smith sat up and glared at Squibs. Everybody glared. The doctor picked up his hat in silence and went out. One by one the others followed.

Anyway, Smith's headache was gone.



DUST, SNOW AND WIND

By Archibald Sullivan

DUST

Oh, spurn me not with all my fine inlay,
That flecks the polish of these outward things.
Who knows that I may blow across your lips
The hearts of poets and the dust of kings?

SNOW

Have I not hung each roof with rich brocade,
And marbled carpets to each doorway spread;
Gone through the storm when you could not come forth
To fling snow roses on your silent dead?

WIND

You bar me out—you close each friendly door,
For I am cold with lips too chill to sing;
Can you forget how one slight child of mine
Brought you the scent of violets in the spring?



THE first joke on man was a side splitter, and no mistake.

December, 1912—4

TRAVEL À LA MODE

By Howard V. Sutherland

EXCERPTS from the diary of Mrs. De Flighter, who made the grand tour by motor last summer:

- July 1. Arrived Liverpool. Trip across tiresome. Found car in perfect condition.
- July 7. A week in Scotland. Tires holding out splendidly.
- July 15. Did the English lakes. Three punctures.
- July 20. Winchester Cathedral, or was it Canterbury? One puncture.
- July 30. Three thousand miles to date. Windshield cracked. Lost a monkey wrench. Leaving for the Continent.
- Aug. 7. Did Brittany. Roads fine.
- Aug. 15. Paris, Tours, Bordeaux. Forget the names of the other places.
- Aug. 22. Toulouse, Lyon, Marseilles. Lost our rear lights.
- Aug. 25. Nice. Lost my veil.
- Sept. 7. Mentone, San Remo. One puncture.
- Sept. 12. Florence. Roads muddy. Smells.
- Sept. 20. Siena, Perugia, Bologna. Getting tired.
- Sept. 26. The dear Alps! Missed Rome, thinking it was up here somewhere. Two punctures.
- Oct. 1. Passed Munich last night.
- Oct. 10. An hour in Dresden. Bought a stein.
- Oct. 15. Berlin. German cars are swagger. One puncture.
- Oct. 19. Hamburg, or Homburg. These German names are so confusing. Just in time to catch steamer. Car safe and as good as new.



WILLIS—Going on a visit?

GILLIS—Oh, no. We are moving today.

WILLIS—But surely you couldn't pack all your goods into one little suitcase like that!

GILLIS—Why not? We use only knock-down furniture, sectional bookcases, collapsible chairs, folding beds, disappearing tables, cookerettes and condensed food, so it is not such a very big job.



WILLIE—After she had married him did she tell him her past?

TILLIE—Not all of it. She said she was twenty-three.

I HAVE PIPED AND YE DID NOT DANCE

By Herbert Kaufman

(Lines to a statue by Gutzon Borglum)

A MAN once lay at a woman's feet
And all but his body slept.
And the woman called, but his ears were stone,
So the woman lived and loved alone.
With the blood of her vein and the blood of her bone,
She called to the man who lay mute and prone—
She cried for his passion to wake for her,
She plead to his soul but it could not stir,
So her days were sad and her nights were mad
For the want of this thing to make them glad,
For the misered wealth that the sleeper had.

But the man drowsed on and he felt no thrill,
And the woman loved on in vain until
The fires that once kept her heart aleap
Subsided and died in their bosom keep.

Then the man who had basked in the pleasing glow,
When he felt the fires of love burn low
And his being was cold and he racked with chill
Responded too late with his half-man will;
And the Morphean mists torn away from his eyes
He beheld her, and seeing, he sought to rise;
Then, turning, he falls and sobs and lies,
For this is the thing that he reads in her eyes:

"I have piped and ye did not dance,
And lo, now my song is still;
I brought my all for your soul to grasp,
My soul was hungry to feel your clasp,
To quiver with joy in your mastering clutch,
But you let me starve, when you had *so* much!
There was a day when the very touch
Of your hand on me was an ecstasy,
But you did not know and you could not see
That I was your chattel, utterly.

"As the stars on high are the slaves of night,
So I glowed for you, but you saw no light.
What mattered it then that my form was cast
In the mould of a goddess from out of the past;

THE SMART SET

That my mouth was a fragrant coral bed,
 That the wine of my lips was sweet and red,
 That my bosom was eager to leap and thrill
 And answer your every passion's will!
 Now, alack, all the song in me is still;
 My soul is dead and it cannot wake;
 You may stir the ashes and you may rake
 The cold charred embers. There is no glow
 In the thing that was flame in the once ago."



MODERN DEFINITIONS

By Sam S. Stinson

MEMORY—The faculty that enables us to remember what we ought to forget.

CURIOSITY—A feeling inspired by things that are none of our business.

FLATTERY—Praise of other people.

GLUTTON—A full-grown man who can eat almost as much as a small boy.

PLEASURE—Anything we can't afford.

MARTYR—A man who lives up to his wife's expectations of him.

PESSIMIST—A person who would chew a pill.

AMBITION—A desire to do something we can't.

TRICKSTER—A person who gets the better of us.

DISAPPOINTMENT—A puncture in the tire of Hope.

SKEPTIC—A person who looks for the wishbone in a soft-boiled egg.

FAME—The *post-mortem* of the gods.

ANTICIPATION—The pleasure we derive from things that generally don't exist.

THE PAINTED WORLD

By Jacques Futrelle

THERE comes a moment when the chaos of the child brain is set to rights by some one vivid image imprinted upon the mental retina, and that is the birth of memory; the picture lingers, vague and distorted, to the end.

It was so with Yvette. Her first recollection, hazy, chimerical, dreamlike, was of a splendid, tinsel, white-breasted, full-limbed blonde creature in silken tights, who swooped her up impulsively in pearl-powdered arms and dabbed her face with damp, rosaline kisses; of brilliant red lips that left sticky splotches on her cheeks, an unclean smelly scarlet that came off on her fingers. Yvette knew this radiant being as Mama, that same Mama whom she knew at home as a loosely gowned, dark-haired, flabby, drab-looking Mama, with streaky pink and white in her face and weary listlessness in her eyes.

Coupled with that first garish recollection, indeed a part of it, was another—a haunting memory of a painted world! It was a wobbly, up-and-down sort of world, where a rose garden was not a rose garden at all, but a flimsy thing of cloth and wood; a world of high, greasy odors centering around a glaring square of light; of subdued voices and dim, creepy silences, and an everlasting throbbing tinkle of music; of sudden vast waves of sound commingled which roared and broke over footlights.

And this painted world was strangely peopled. There were many like Mama, white-breasted, full-limbed, only they were not so pretty; and their tights were red, and blue, and green, not flesh-colored like Mama's. Two or three times they danced, laughing, out of the

square of light toward Yvette in the shadows, their feet a-twinkling rhythmically, the while they blew a storm of kisses from their finger tips. And it was so odd, as they came close, to see the smile die on their lips, and inexorable time wrinkle their faces. Once one of them paused and stroked Yvette's hair, and another playfully pinched her cheeks; still another merely stared at her a long, long time.

Then there was a greasy old man whose hair was gray all over except right at the edges, where it was black; and a loud woman with a hard, shiny face, and a good-looking well-dressed youth, and two funny, funny men. One of the men was so fat he could barely squeeze through a door, and as he came into the shadows he unhooked something at his neck and took off the whole front of himself! The other man had a red, tip-tilted nose, a white upper lip and—and green whiskers! Truly they were monsters, these two, but Yvette was not afraid. The splendid creature who kissed her had said nothing would harm her if she sat quite still and did not cry. And she was doing that, motionless, fascinated, in the corner of a couch, a white daub in the unholy shadows. Her nurse stood near her protectingly.

The fat man came and sat down beside her, and still she was not afraid.

"Hello, baby!" he greeted good-naturedly, and he extended a friendly hand. "Is this the kid?" he inquired of the man with the green whiskers.

"Yep," was the reply. "Pretty, ain't she?"

"Well, she don't get it from you," said the fat man flatly. "How old is she?"

"Search me. About two, I think."

The fat man regarded him with a singular, thoughtful squinting of the eyes.

"You *think*!" he remarked. "Doting father!"

"Never saw her till the beginnin' o' this season," explained the man with the green whiskers. "I was out on the coast with the 'Mornin' Glories' for three seasons; and me and Mama don't speak as we pass by. She got a little peeved because I wouldn't lead her up to a minister and say, 'I will.'"

"Why didn't you?"

"Why should I?"

"For the kid's sake."

The man with the green whiskers shrugged his shoulders and the white upper lip curled sneeringly. The fat man patted Yvette's tiny hand.

"What's her name?" he inquired.

"Yvette. Wouldn't that scald you? Mary Jane'd be more like."

"Great place for her back here—behind the scenes at a burlesque show," mused the fat man ironically. "Fine and dandy to give her lasting impressions."

"Maybe Mama's goin' to break her in early," suggested the man with the green whiskers. "Just gettin' her used to the smell o' grease paint."

He laughed, an unpleasant, grating chuckle that made Yvette cringe fearfully, then sauntered away; and soon the fat man rose, buckled on the front part of himself and squeezed through a door into the lighted square.

A boisterous wave of sound greeted him. He said something to the man with the green whiskers, already there, and the man with the green whiskers said something back, whereupon the fat man slapped him with a newspaper. A deafening roar succeeded, and Yvette, a little frightened, looked on with staring eyes as she clung to the hand of her nurse. Then the fat man said something to the man with the green whiskers, and the man with the green whiskers—stuck a hatchet in his head!

Yvette screamed in terror, the while pandemonium broke loose somewhere out beyond the footlights.

"Shut up that kid there," came a

harsh voice from the shadows near by, and a man came toward her.

Dumb with fright, Yvette tumbled from the couch and started to run blindly—anywhere! Her flight ended abruptly in the arms of her mother, who swept her up and cuddled her protectingly against the warm, bare bosom. She lay there all a-tremble with her face hidden as the man came up.

"Get that kid off the stage," he commanded sharply.

"Who do you think you're talking to—the scrub lady?" queried the mother with that superb disdain which is found only in the third class theater. "Just because you are stage manager you can't talk to *me* like that!"

"Well, get her out o' this," he grumbled.

"And if I don't, what're you going to do about it?" There was splendid defiance in the mother eyes, calm aggression in the tone.

"She ain't got no business back here anyhow," complained the stage manager in a milder tone. "This ain't no kindergarten."

For a moment the mother held the baby to her breast passionately and was silent. Yvette turned a shy glance upward, and her eyes met infinite love, adoration in those that looked down upon her. She sighed, and comforted, safe, relaxed to the snuggling caress.

"Nobody in front heard her," said the mother quietly. She transferred the clinging child to the arms of her nurse. "Take her into my dressing room." Then she turned upon the stage manager. "And don't ever get fresh with me any more," she warned, "or this company'll lose a leading lady in the middle of an act. I'll put your old show on the bum for fair."

"But I don't see why—" he blustered.

"Oh, forget it!" she interrupted.

She passed him with her head tilted and took her place near the front entrance awaiting her cue. After a little the man with the green whiskers approached her belligerently. The mother faced him, and a fierce gleam flamed in the depths of her painted eyes.

"Why didn't you slap the head off that kid for yellin' like that?" he blurted in white-faced anger. "It might have spoiled my laugh."

"And if I don't slap the head off her," the mother mocked dangerously, quietly, "maybe you will?"

The man with the green whiskers met the steady gaze for one tense instant, and the fingers of his right hand closed convulsively. He would have liked to sink them into that white, shapely throat. She read the thought, and the scarlet lips curled tauntingly.

"Aw, you make me sick!" he burst out impotently.

He turned away. A moment later her cue came, and she bounded upon the stage, smiling.

II

At twelve Yvette was beautiful, with the blank, expressionless beauty of a doll. She was trim of body, trig of limb, and there was that in the graceful, growing curves of her which gave promise of a splendid womanhood. A glory of tawny hair, dull as copper, enveloped her neck and shoulders; her features were straight and regular and delicate, exquisitely serene, calmly chaste. By nature she was taciturn, silent; but occasionally, only occasionally, an animated spark flamed in the somber eyes which looked out upon the world moodily, always moodily.

Seven of her dozen years had passed monotonously in a boarding school, where she had come to know herself as the only child of a wealthy widow who traveled extensively, one of a score of tiny, lonely maids who were jointly mothered by a patient, sweet-faced little old maid. The tedium of this existence was broken by visits to her mother at irregular periods. Sometimes it would be only for a week, at another time for one, two or three months; though once, for more than a year, she did not see her at all. But always, always she found the mother eyes blazing with maternal love; always, always she was gathered hungrily into the perfumed, passionate, suffocating embrace, and held close,

close to the mother heart. No answering flame was kindled within her by the lavishness of this affection; she submitted to it with patience and good grace because it was expected of her.

And she learned to dread the parting again, not because she hated to go but because of the interminable days that preceded; days that her mother spent in weeping; days when the endless weariness in her eyes was intensified and made ugly by tear-reddened lids; when the streaky pink and white in her face was mottled by some inward surge of emotion. They were dreary, dismal, chilling, these days; and she was sorry for her mother in a dispassionate sort of way—sorry for the trouble she seemed to cause her. Just at the last there always came a heap of extravagances—dolls, books, bonbons, toys, frocks, a thousand things. She received them as a matter of course, and thanked her mother for them graciously as she had been taught to do—that was all.

One day at the luncheon hour the little teacher informed her that she would be excused for the afternoon so that she might pack her belongings.

"Your mother has returned to the city," she explained. "She will send for you at six."

Yvette nodded a dumb acquiescence, and sighed a little. It was all to be gone over again: that suffocating, passionate embrace; days and days with only the dull companionship of—a perfumed woman, a submitting to the eternal caresses of her! Suddenly, without any reason, she clasped the little teacher about the neck and pressed her fresh, plump young cheek against the faded, withered one, then turned and raced up the stairs to hide something that glistened in her eyes.

At home—it was what her mother called it—in the stuffy apartment she always had known everything happened just as she had expected, just as it always had happened. There was her mother, the same loosely gowned, flabby, drab-looking mother with the streaky pink and white in her face, and, after the first blaze of adoration had passed, the same weary listlessness in her eyes; the

same perfumed, passionate, suffocating embrace; everything just as she had known it would be.

"Two whole months, my darling—two whole months!" the mother whispered rapturously as she held the child close, close against her. "Two whole months!"

"Yes, mama," Yvette responded. It seemed necessary to say something; there was even a pretense of crowding a note of joy into the tone, the shallow make-believe of a child anxious to please.

"And we'll be together, just me and you, all that time." The mother eyes were radiant with the light Yvette knew so well, but she only took note of the bad grammar. "Won't it be grand?"

"Yes, mama," dutifully.

Day succeeded day, dully, endlessly. But by night strange dreams came to her, savage, vivid half-realities. Shadowy senses of sound broke through her slumbers to be seized upon by a partially aroused brain and distorted into weird impossibilities. Once she dreamed of a hideous, high-pitched quarrel and snarling implications; frequently she seemed to hear the musical clink of glasses and careless oaths and low laughter; and always she dreamed, night after night, of her mother bending over her and breathing a strong, pungent odor into her face with a kiss. They were dreams, she knew, because her mother had said they were, but she came to delight in them because they shattered the monotony of the day.

One night the thing that began as a dream blended so with the real that it left her confused. A violent noise in the adjoining room caused her to stir in her sleep; hazily it seemed to be the crash of a door closing; then came, in a man's voice, a gruff, thick-tongued "Hello!" Of such vagaries are dreams made that Yvette's mind bridged the chasm of years, and instantly she associated the voice with—of all impossible things—green whiskers! Some minute cell, far back in her brain, had given up memory.

"Sh-h-h-h!" she heard her mother say warningly.

"What's the matter?" came a guttural demand. The man seemed to enunciate with great difficulty. "Is the kid here?"

"Yvette's asleep," said her mother; then again: "Sh-h-h-h!"

Faintly, Yvette seemed to hear the rings of the portières click as they were pushed aside and her mother, in filmy, trailing white, entered the room where she was sleeping and bent above her, breathing that pungent, strong odor into her face. After a moment she straightened up seemingly satisfied, and went out again; the portière rings clicked behind her.

"I told you never to come here, didn't I?" she heard her mother ask quietly. The voice was hard, metallic, utterly unlike the caressing tone Yvette knew.

"Gettin' to be a regular queen, ain't you?" the man sneered heavily.

"Not so loud," the mother warned tensely. "What do you want?"

"How is the kid?" the man queried in turn.

"None of your business," was the curt rejoinder. "What do you want?"

"None o' my business, eh?" In Yvette's dream it seemed that the man chuckled, an unpleasant, grating sort of chuckle; and again her memory stirred feebly. "She's half mine, ain't she?"

"No," her mother replied fiercely. "She's all mine, mine, *all mine!* Do you understand? *All mine!* What do you want?"

"Just came up to see how you're gettin' on, that's all," was the answer. "Got in with 'The Parisian Widows' Sunday night, heard you was in town and came by to have a look. We ain't seen one another for six or seven years, and I ain't the one to forget an old sweetheart. I sort o' thought you'd be glad to see me."

"Glad to see *you!*" the mother repeated slowly. "*You!*"

"I'm doin' fine and dandy, if anybody should ask you—the hit o' the show. Knocked 'em clean stiff at the Bridge in Baltimore, and didn't do a thing to 'em here Monday night! Six encores on that new song o' mine! You wouldn't know the act, all new business, a scream!

We cut out the green whiskers and use seltzer instead o' the hatchet."

Instantly a sharp boundary line between dream and reality was established in Yvette's mind. It was only in dreams, of course, that there could be—green whiskers!

"What's the use of us goin' on like this, anyhow?" the man went on persuasively. "Let's let bygones be bygones, and—"

"We will *not* let bygones be bygones," the mother interrupted sharply. "You're drunk; get out of here!"

"Oh, I ain't in no hurry," the man said.

"Well—I am!" the mother blazed.

"Maybe you're expectin' someone else?" the man sneered.

"What's it to you?" demanded the mother fiercely. And then, in a low, distinct voice: "I don't want ever to see you again; I don't want you ever to speak to me if you do see me; and I don't want you ever to come here again, or come any place where I am. Now go!"

"Oh, say, look here, that's not the way to treat an old sweetheart," the man whined drunkenly. "Look here," he blustered on: "Rosnow, the manager, has signed me for next season, thirty-six weeks at sixty per, and he wants a new leadin' woman. The one we've got's too fat—gets a laugh every time she comes on. Now what's the matter with you for the job? What d'you say?" There was a little pause. "He wants a good looker, and I believe he'd give you a hundred."

"I'm getting that," said the mother scornfully.

"Maybe a hundred and a quarter, then. And there's a chance to pick forty per on the side for the kid."

"For the kid!" the mother repeated slowly. "Yvette!" There was harsh violence in the single word.

"Sure thing," explained the man, ignoring the threat in her voice. "Next season we're puttin' on a new piece—got a Cupid in it. They've got to have a kid for it, and—and it's a pick-up of forty per, easy."

There was a momentary silence. In

her dream Yvette seemed to know what that silence meant; in some vague way she was threatened, and she imagined her mother standing with hands clenched.

"No!" came at last, explosively, in her mother's voice. "No! Not that for her! So help me, I'd kill her before I'd let her come to it. She doesn't even know I'm in it, and she never will. *Not that for a thousand a week!*"

"Gee! You play it like a tragedy. You for Blaney next season. But think it over, and—"

"No!" flamed the mother again. Then quietly, dangerously: "You'd better go now."

Yvette seemed to hear the scrape of a chair as it was pushed back; then the man spoke again.

"Now look here," and there was a menace in his voice, "you ain't got no better right to that kid than I got. If you don't want that forty per, *I do!* I'll take her, and put her on."

"You take her! You!" It was a sharp, snakelike hissing. "Take me at my word, and get out of here."

"Where is she? I want to see her."

"*Get—out—of—here!*"

Clearly, through the thin fabric of her dream, Yvette heard a slight scuffling sound; then a chair bumped against a table, and finally, in the raging, drunken voice of the man:

"Take your hands off me! Lemme go!"

And then she heard a dull blow, and felt the floor shake as something heavy fell. There followed a little silence, broken only by the sound of heavy breathing, and after a moment the sound of unsteady footsteps, the clink of a glass and the gurgle of a liquid.

In her dream Yvette sat upright in bed, wide awake, and listened for a long time, terror-stricken—listened, *listened!* Not a sound; not even the soft shuffle of her mother's slippers! Suddenly the rings on the portières clattered, and the light which streamed through showed her the heavy, splotched face of a man peering straight at her. His eyes were glassy, and his lips twitched horribly. He lurched into the room and came toward her.

"I'm your father, kid, and don't let nobody tell you nothin' else," he said thickly, and his breath was foul with the strong pungent odor she knew. "Some day I'm goin' to come and get you. See?"

Solemnly he turned and went reeling out between the portières; the door banged furiously; then came utter silence.

Transfixed, shivering, Yvette sat for minute after minute waiting, staring at the sharp line of light which shot through the drooping curtains from the brilliant room beyond. Her father was dead; her mother had said so; this—this thing was some fantastic horrid nightmare! Finally, in her dream, it seemed she leaped out of bed and peered into the other room.

On the floor, mute and motionless, lay her mother clad in the filmy lacy white, with her splendid neck bare, and her naked bosom dyed with a thin stream of scarlet which flowed from a wound in the pallid pink and white face. Yvette stared for a long, long time—it was a horrid dream—then crept back into bed shivering.

On the following morning Yvette's mother was removed to a hospital, and an operation performed; the child returned to the care of the teacher. It was three months before Yvette saw her mother again; then—then she found herself clasped desperately in the arms of a hideous, scar-faced one-eyed creature. The blaze of the mother love shone doubly in that one eye; where the other should have been there was only an empty socket!

III

ALL life is wonderful and alluring from the windows of a cloister. At nineteen Yvette looked out upon the living world with longing, curious eyes. Soon, now, she would become a part of it; and the dawning of that strange new existence would mark an ending of the finishing school's careful seclusion with its deadly inaction, its monotonous inertia. She waited, impatiently, for the vague,

undefined reward which was to compensate her for the unremitting years of drilling and training; a reward that was held in store for her—Out There! What was it to be? She wondered, and wondering, the moodiness in her eyes blazed into eagerness.

Her beauty was tense, sheer, absolute, marblelike; the splendid physical promises of childhood had been more than fulfilled. By all the current standards of gentility she was fitted, in her own person, to enter upon the highest planes of social life. She was singularly rich in the little graces which ease the frictions of humanity and heighten its pleasures; vibrant animalism, tempered by the veneer of culture; all of youth's capacity for enjoyment and youth's buoyancy as yet unawakened.

But to Yvette the world was an unknown quantity; acquaintances were few, and her friends were confined exclusively to the small coterie of girls who had shared the boarding and finishing school days with her. Even among these she was one apart, a creature of mystery, "the only child of a wealthy widow who traveled extensively." She felt it, and she was made to feel it.

For five years she had not seen her mother; she had known of her continued existence only by the unfailing, and absurdly large, remittances which she received through an attorney. He had told her that her mother was abroad, and seemed to think that covered all possible questions in her mind; but there had never come to her one single line direct from her mother, not so much as a postcard. There had come, however, through the same attorney, a score of expensive presents, garish, flashy things, wholly unsuited to her years. Other girls received letters; she received none. She wondered why.

As the end of the finishing school term drew near Yvette's fellows were wont to discuss their plans delightedly; and each had a plan, an ambition, a future, save Yvette. Many of them were to enter immediately upon the brilliant social life to which they had been born, and for which they had been bred; two or three were to go abroad; gaieties of divers

sorts, made more fascinating by anticipation and bubbling discussion, filled the programmes of those remaining. Yvette listened silently, listened the while her empty heart grew sullen and a storm brewed in the somber eyes. These rewards she understood; sheer envy made her dream of one greater than these, and this greater one was to be hers! The dreams, long continued, became at last in her mind a fixed certainty.

On the eve of the breaking up a letter came for Yvette, the first she ever had received in all her life. The postmark was London, the superscription scrawly, straggly, the hand of one unaccustomed to the pen, and the envelope seemed to have been drenched in a sickly, overpowering perfume. She recognized the perfume instantly; she had known it all her life.

The letter was from her mother; she opened it feverishly, and as she noted the faulty spelling and deciphered the painfully constructed sentences, disgustingly overburdened with terms of endearment, she was first bewildered, then surprised and finally—this from her mother! It might have been the labored product of a scullery maid. Briefly it informed her that her mother was returning on the following steamer.

They met in the stuffy apartment a few days later. Yvette had been waiting there since morning, marblelike, severely simple in attire; then *she* came, the mother, closely veiled, flashily gowned, heavily perfumed, with pendant diamonds in her ears, a brooch at her breast and hands a-glitter. Yvette, slender, elegant, stood forward to meet her, conquering a startled repugnance, and yielded listlessly, as always, to the passionate, suffocating embrace. The mother gave an inarticulate cry of joy, and Yvette, dry-eyed, felt tears upon her face.

She had changed little, the mother. The hideous scar on her face was none the less evident that artful attempts had been made to lessen it with cosmetics; the brilliant glassiness of the artificial eye was emphasized and made more ghastly by the tender, moist mother love

in the other. In figure she had not changed at all; she was regal, as always, when not utterly relaxed in the filmy, flabby negligée which Yvette had known since infancy. But Yvette had eyes only for the disfiguring scar, the glassy eye, the daubed rouge; she stared in spite of herself the while she fought back a nameless feeling of aversion.

As in her childhood, there came days and days of dreary inaction, the two of them cooped up together; the mother glutting a heart famine, jealous of Yvette's every moment; the daughter impatient for life, rebellious, silent, smothering the turbulence within by an effort. One day she stood at the window staring out vacantly at a billboard across the street. A man came and pasted sheets on it, and they read like this:

GREATEST MYSTERY OF EUROPE
THE MASKED LADY
OF THE
MOULIN ROUGE

Granlin Theater

Next Week

"Why do we never go out, mother?" she asked as she turned.

"Go out?" the mother repeated, as if surprised. "Why, my darling, ain't you happy here with me?"

"Yes, of course," replied Yvette, with a thin assumption of cheeriness, noting the bad grammar, "but I've been in school so long. I've never been anywhere else; I've never seen anything; I've never met anybody. I've never been inside a theater; may we not go some time?"

"You are never to go to the theater, Yvette," said the mother earnestly. "It is not a place for you." She stretched out her arms impulsively and encircled the girl. "Not that, my darling, not that!"

Yvette, perplexed, went back to the window and stared out stonily.

"But surely I'm not to be cut off from all amusement," she urged monotonously. "It's dreadfully tiresome, never going anywhere."

"I had hoped," and there was a beseeching note in the mother's voice—"I had hoped you would be quite content here with me, at least for a time."

"But am I never to do anything?" persisted Yvette.

"Do anything!" the mother echoed. "Do you mean work for a living? You are beyond that, my darling. It ain't necessary—for you. I have educated you to be a lady; I have given you the best of everything, and—"

"I don't mean work, necessarily," interrupted the girl. "I mean something to do—work, play, anything!"

The mother's shallow soul was disturbed; and for a long time she regarded her daughter silently. She did not understand—she could not understand—the buoyant animalism of youth which abhors fetters of inaction; her own youth was so far away, and she had never known inaction. Fineries, jewels, infinite leisure she had given Yvette; she could not understand what more was desired.

"Is there anything else I can give you, anything you want to make you perfectly happy?" she asked at last.

"No," Yvette replied drearily, "nothing that money can buy, if that is what you mean."

A week passed. On Monday evening her mother, with no explanation beyond the brief statement that she must attend to a little business, dressed and went out. It was eleven o'clock when she returned. Again on the following evening she went out, and on Wednesday afternoon. Yvette, left alone, stormed restlessly back and forth through the apartment, her curiosity piqued, sullen anger raging within her. She had expected so much, and there was only this, another form of imprisonment.

A knock came at the door. She opened it, and a man lurched into the room. He was unshaven, bleary-eyed, splotted of face, unclean of person, and his breath was heavy with the fumes of—that pungent odor she had once known. Vaguely, as in a dream, the sodden face was familiar to Yvette, and as she stared inquiringly, unafraid, into the glassy eyes, she knew him as the man who, years before, had come to her in a dream. Then he spoke, a gruff, thick-tongued "Hello!" Instantly another dream moment of Yvette's life returned, and she thought of—green whiskers!

"Don't you know me, kid?" demanded the man. He reeled toward a chair and steadied himself with one hand on the back of it.

"Yes, I know you," she replied quietly, staring, staring as if fascinated. "You are my father!"

"Right-o," he hiccuped, and sprawled into the chair, squinting at her drunkenly. "Gee, you're a beaut!" he said admiringly, after a moment. "Your father's proud of you, if anybody should ask you about it. Your mother at the theater?"

"At the theater?" repeated Yvette wonderingly.

"They say she's a knockout, he went on, and the arrogance of his tone degenerated into a whine. "A thousand a week for her—and look at me, your poor father, broke and up against it!"

Yvette did not understand; she merely listened as she sought to interpret this strange, new language, the while her nimble mind rioted with conjecture. The moodiness left the somber eyes; they were keenly alive now, ablaze with questions. Her mother at the theater! A thousand a week!

"Biggest hit Broadway ever seen," he rambled on whiningly. "Only thing in the show. Headlined! Featured all over the boards! A thousand a week! And look at your poor father, broke and up against it!"

Suddenly the mist cleared, the veil of mystery was rent, and Yvette understood. She rose, lethargy gone and her blood, startled out of its chill, racing through her veins. Her mother was an actress! This mother who, inconsistently enough, objected to the theater for her, was herself a leading figure in it!

Maudlin tears were beginning to run unchecked down her father's splotted face, and she turned away from him toward the brilliant afternoon sunlight of the outer world. Something seemed to snap within her, leaving her light and free. For a long time she stood at the window, rigid, taut, with hands outstretched in an all-enveloping gesture of welcome. This world, so long denied her, was to be hers now; she would *make* it hers, now that she understood!

Many things grew clear as she stood there; her mother's long absences—she was traveling, to be sure; and the long time abroad—her fame was international! But why had she made a mystery of it? What reason caused her mother to lay a ban upon the theater for her? And then dormant memory began to struggle for recognition, a memory of babyhood, of tinselled women in silken tights, of grotesque men, of a painted world!

Her eyes sparkled as she turned toward her father.

"What does my mother play?" she asked.

"Plays nothin'," he hiccuped—"just shows her shape—'The Masked Lady o' the Moulin Rouge.'" And then, in drunken enthusiasm: "Not another woman on earth c'n touch her for shape—biggest sensation Broadway ever seen. A thousand dollars a week, and look at me, your poor father, broke and up against it."

The light died in Yvette's eyes as one snuffs a candle. She stared dully at this polluted creature, who was her father, and dropped into a chair. . . . She gave him money and he went away. . . . The Masked Lady of the Moulin Rouge! The phrase had been blared from newspapers and billboards for a fortnight. . . . A mysterious masked woman who prostituted a God-given grace of figure to batten upon the lust of man! . . . And this woman was her mother! And this the secret so long and so carefully guarded. . . . And hers, in spite of its veneer, was only the commingled blood of a drunken, bestial creature, and this—this woman! . . . Yvette laughed!

From a place in a balcony Yvette saw, that night, the musical play which had as its incidental sensation "The Masked Lady of the Moulin Rouge"—her mother. The scene was a studio, and there came a woman closely masked, richly gowned and furred and jeweled; Yvette knew every gesture, every curve, every undulation of the splendid body. The woman—her mother!—laid aside veil, hat, furs and gloves, and there was a tense, appreciable holding of breath in the audience. Next, with studied delib-

eration, she removed every garment, first baring her beautiful arms and neck and bosom. . . . The lights dimmed, a calcium spluttered and cleft the gloom of the stage, the remaining garments fell away all together and this woman—her mother!—stood forth unashamed, her ivory flesh gleaming satinlike through the thin enshrouding tissue of silk.

"Gawd!" said the man next to Yvette.

One long instant of silence; then a storm broke and raged through the theater. Yvette saw and heard with face aflame and heart pounding. . . . A remark, indecent in its suggestiveness, went hurtling across the theater and the audience laughed. . . . Half a dozen classic poses, and then the curtain came down, to rise again, and again, and again! . . . The thing had been done before, but the mask, inscrutable, baffling, gave this its mystery and sensation; Yvette saw it unerringly.

If that mask should be dropped and show this woman—her mother!—as she was, hideously scarred of face, with the glassy artificial eye—well, what then?

Yvette wondered, and wondering again she laughed!

IV

As the pendulum swings to the right, so does it swing to the left. It was so with Yvette. The careful refinement of years was obliterated in that instant when she saw the mother who had borne her stand forth almost nude and unashamed, while an audience, satiated with the commonplace, eager for the bizarre, the daring, applauded. Ideals painstakingly inculcated and fostered fell shattered at the shapely, brazen feet of this woman—her mother! Every sense of delicacy and modesty and common decency was violated, and only morbid imaginings remained. The revolt came instantaneously; the fine veneer sloughed off, laying bare the coarse, primal grain, and the neurotic blood of a bestial father showed red beneath it. The pendulum had swung to the left.

The father came often to the stuffy

apartment, always when the mother was away; always drunk, or drinking heavily, always reviling his luck, always whining for money, and always receiving it. Yvette listened to his egotistical ramblings and boastful incoherencies, and she came to see the world with false, distorted vision.

The mother continued to go out every evening, and on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, but she never offered further explanation of her coming and going than the one she had given Yvette that first evening—a little business. Yvette asked her nothing, and told her nothing; so outwardly all things were as they had been.

"Say, kid, why don't you let me put *you* in the business?" the father asked one night. "Why don't *you* go on the stage?"

The suggestion gave definite form to an intangible idea of her own, an idea which she had not as yet permitted to crystallize into a determination. Now it brought a quick flush to her cheeks. It would be an irrevocable descent from the pedestal, a final severing with that other life which had been drilled into her. But already the end had come. What did anything matter? She was a daughter of the depths! She rose suddenly and paced the floor.

"I don't know that I am qualified," she said at last, but a thrill of excitement crept into her voice. "One must be clever."

"Clever nothin'," exclaimed her father. "With a face like yours and a figger like yours you don't have to be clever. All they want in the show business is a good looker with a shape. You'd knock their eye out!"

For a moment Yvette allowed her flaming gaze to rest upon her father; then a slow, cynical smile grew upon her lips. She turned suddenly to a mirror and studied the lithe, graceful figure reflected there, studied it intently, dispassionately, with the eyes of a stranger, and found it good! She wondered how she would look—Her face went crimson, and she faced her father again.

"How should I go about it?" she asked.

"I'll fix it for you," he assured her; "fix you right, with the right sort. You'll be a leadin' lady in six months; and you won't forget your poor old father, will you?"

He came again the next night, and with him came another man; a man with a pallid, pasty face, and pudgy hands, overfed, overdressed, gross, repulsive; a man with a vulturelike beak of a nose, and bold, lewd eyes. He was the manager of "The Gay Girls of Gotham Burlesquers."

Yvette accepted the flabby, damp hand he offered and met his admiring gaze with scarlet cheeks. Slowly he appraised every tender curve of her figure; and a faint tinge of color showed in the pasty face.

"You'll do, my dear," he said finally. "You're the sort."

"I've never had any experience." She tried to smile into the licentious eyes.

"Doesn't matter, dearie," he told her. "You'll do. Rehearsals begin in two weeks, and fifty a week'll be about right to start, eh?"

"She'll be your leadin' lady in six months, if anybody should ask you about it," put in the father maudlinly. "Make all your other girls look like sellin' platers. Got her mother skinned a mile for shape, even in her best days."

The manager of "The Gay Girls of Gotham" laid a pudgy hand on the girl's shoulder, and stared at her with the greed of lust in his eyes.

"I think me and you understand one another, eh?"

"Yes, I suppose we do," Yvette responded.

"Damn you!" remarked the manager tenderly.

Yvette drew back frightened; then she laughed, hysterically.

Tragedy and Pleasure lie side by side under the pall of night, and only the thinness of a wall divides. Here a mottled, blear-eyed creature, made in the semblance of his God, lies in a drunken stupor. There the clear voices of youth rise in a joyous song. Here, in the dim light, is the sinister glint of a revolver.

There a maiden thrills ecstatically at the innocent touch of a hand. Here the besotted, the obscene, the foul; there the clean, the pure, the chaste. And only the thinness of a wall divides.

The drunkard stirred uneasily in his sleep, and his fingers tightened spasmodically on the revolver.

"I'll kill him if he don't come across with the coin," he muttered thickly. "I'll fix him right, if anybody should ask you about it."

Then, overcome, he slept again.

The door opened, and a woman, closely veiled, entered. For an instant she stood staring, staring down at the drunkard, this man—this creature, whose evil ministrations had brought her so vast a heritage of misery; this father of her child whose brutal mark she bore indelibly in her scarred face; this lewd animal who had refused to give a name—sullied as it was—to the child she had borne him. For seven years he had been out of her life—since that night he had struck her—and not one moment of all that time had she allowed herself to forget the hate she bore him—this man who had disfigured her. Suddenly all the hatred of her life burst into flame. Here he was, under her hands, drunk, helpless; and a revolver lay flabbily in his fingers!

Then came another thought. Why was he here? Yvette! With a sudden fierce cry she turned away from him and threw aside the portières which screened the room beyond. It was empty; the bed was undisturbed. She called and there was no answer. She stood there, clinging to the portières, fighting back the hideous weakness of fear which seemed to be crushing her; and at last her strength came, a strange, savage, exultant strength. In a bound she was beside the man again, shaking him violently.

"Where is she? *Where is she?*"

There was none of the woman about her now, only the fighting instinct of an animal. Her voice was a snarl. She tore away veil and hat and flung them down, and her disheveled hair tumbled about her shoulders.

"*Where is she? Where is she?*"

"I'll kill him, that's what I'll do!" muttered the drunkard.

She clawed at the stupid, mottled face until her sharp nails brought the blood; the drunkard struck at her; then, insensible alike to pain and her frantic shakings, he relapsed again into unconsciousness.

"*Where is she? Where is she?*"

As if in answer the door opened and Yvette stood there enframed. Her eyes were brilliant, her cheeks scarlet with the flame of wine. She took a step into the room, reeled a little, then laughed senselessly.

"Why, my darling!" exclaimed the mother. "Where have you been?"

"None of your business," Yvette replied thickly. "I don't have to explain my conduct to you." She reached a table, and stood with one hand upon it steadying herself; then she faced her mother defiantly. "I've been out—seeing *life!*"

A woman's soul died in that instant; a woman's heart stood still, until hope and love and faith had passed from it, then clanked on. And with that change came another, a physical change, an infinite calm. The mother got up from the floor and closed the door.

"Did you go alone?" she inquired, with that infinite calm.

"No," replied the girl defiantly. "I went with the manager of 'The Gay Girls of Gotham Burlesquers.' You wouldn't let me go anywhere, or see anything; you kept me here a prisoner. Well, I don't have to ask you now. I'll go where I please, when I please, and as often as I please!"

The manager of "*The Gay Girls of Gotham Burlesquers*"!

"I'm to be leading lady of 'The Gay Girls of Gotham,'" Yvette went on. "The leading lady—do you understand? The leading lady, as you were once. And I'm to have an automobile."

Then she laughed, the discordant senseless cackle of wine, and snapped her fingers in her mother's face.

"I didn't know you knew such a man—any man," remarked the mother colorlessly.

"I've known him for a week," boasted the girl. "My father brought him here, and he's been here every night since." She sneered into the patient scarred face. "And you thought you knew everything I was doing. Well—you didn't!"

She reeled past, pausing at the doorway.

"You were a fool when you brought me up to be a *lady*! I couldn't be a *lady*! I don't want to be a *lady*! I want to see *life* and *live*! Well—I've done it, and I shall continue to do it. A *lady*! *Mel*! The daughter of such as you two!"

She disappeared into the room beyond, leaving the mother standing there with impassive face and rigid limbs. After a long while the mother picked up the revolver and examined it curiously. Then she let her gaze travel slowly, slowly to the sprawling, drunken figure of the man who was responsible for it all. An eternity passed; she put the revolver on the table.

"It is not enough," she said quietly. "He must *know* his punishment."

For an hour she sat staring blankly out of the window. There came no tears, no sobs, no visible signs of whatever emotion she felt. Finally she slid out of

the chair upon her knees and lifted clasped hands to heaven.

"Merciful God," she said—and it was not a prayer, rather it was an explanation—"merciful God, I have done the best I knew. I gave all. I can't ask forgiveness for me, only for her."

She rose calmly and passed through the portières. When she came back she held a knife—from which blood was dripping! She cast the knife at the feet of the drunkard. Then she picked up the revolver, and kneeling before the sodden creature in the chair, staring into his face, began to scream. Agony was in the tone, horror, *fear*! At last from a distance came a clamor of hurrying footsteps. She listened tensely for a moment; then, as if satisfied, she pressed the revolver to her bosom and fired. She fell forward across his knees, and with her last strength closed the drunken fingers upon the weapon. She slid to the floor, and lay still.

"Our — Father — which — art — in—Heaven—"

Men came and smashed in the door. They found him there, the drunkard, staring down in stupefaction upon the body, infinite horror in the bleared, bloodshot eyes, and the revolver clenched tightly in his hand.



PATRON—Does anything go with hash?
WAITER—No; everything is included.



SOME women of the Social Sea are ancient mariners.



IF the recall goes into effect, many a judge will be on the anxious bench.

THE PICCOLO MAN

By Arthur Henry Gooden

THE villa was a tiny one, perched on the mountainside, high above the town. On an upper balcony stood a girl, her hand held above her eyes to shut out the silver flash of the bay beyond. A man was striding up the road that wound from the town, and as the girl watched his approach her eyes became softly luminous, and an expectant flush crept into her cheeks, leaving them warm and glowing. Presently he saw her and waved his hand. She waved back, then throwing a white scarf about her bare shoulders, she ran down the stairs and into the garden.

"Your American has been here," she said breathlessly. "He leaves for Naples tonight—by the eight o'clock boat."

"Hatton!" exclaimed the man. His face fell. "I'm sorry, little one—I must see Hatton. If I hurry back to town I may catch him."

His wife laughed triumphantly and linked her arm through his. "I knew you would—but dinner is already served. I refuse to eat a lonely dinner."

"Such a clever bride!" cried Antonio Branchi, and together they ran up the flower-bordered walk and entered the dining room. On the table, beside Branchi's plate, lay a black leather case. He looked at it, then at his wife, with a smile half quizzical, half tender. Her eyes fell before the glance.

"It would console me for your absence," she whispered shyly.

His eyes kindled, and opening the leather case he took out a piccolo. "Ah!" he said. "And the tune?"

The look that she bestowed upon him was one of radiant understanding; then with a happy little sigh she snuggled her dark head against his shoulder.

"Play," she commanded — "play *the* tune."

He laughed contentedly and put the instrument to his lips. A ripple of mellow silver notes filled the room. It was a quaint little air, a cradle song, strangely fascinating. As the last sweet note faded, the girl drew a long, happy breath and flung her arms about his neck.

"It's wonderful! It makes every fiber in me thrill with the joy of it! It makes me long for the hour when I can croon and croon it; it makes me see—" She broke off and hid her face.

He held her tight. "Ah, Lucia," he whispered fondly, "you were the inspiration—you—your happiness—our wonderful happiness! It shall be for our ears alone—ours and—"

When Count Branchi passed through the garden gate on his way back to town it was quite dark. Below him the lights of Messina twinkled, and out in the harbor he could see the night lamps of the vessels swaying and bobbing like great brilliant fireflies. Softly whistling his little lullaby, he plunged down the hill and soon reached the main thoroughfare, along which he strode rapidly until he came to a narrow dark side street. Here he hesitated. It was a byway frequented by the waterfront element, and Branchi was well aware of its unsavory reputation. But it was a short cut to the docks, and he was in great haste. So down the alley he swung, blithely humming his little lullaby. Suddenly the sky crashed down upon him, myriad stars flashed and danced, then all was a black, illimitable nothing.

II

"Just think of it," said Miss Dacres, "almost Christmas—and here I am carrying a sunshade to keep the sun from freckling my nose!"

The nose in question was to David Quinn the most adorable in the world.

"Freckles are becoming—when one is nineteen," he laughed.

"Bachelors always know what to say," bantered the girl. "It must come from frequent and long practice, I fear."

"Sometimes from the heart," said David Quinn slowly.

A delicate pink crept into her cheeks. She changed the subject abruptly. "Nobody has offered to take me to hear the Italian band at the plaza, and I'm simply dying to go," she vowed.

They wandered out of the hotel grounds toward the plaza. It was a day to be alive, David Quinn thought; the wonderful blue of the sky, the sparkling sunshine, the ecstatic mocking birds, the riot of flowers were things to quicken the heart of any man; and then—there was Emily Dacres!

Far out across the Santa Barbara channel lay the rugged islands, rising mistily from the sea, but, for the first time during her stay in the little Southern California town, their purple loveliness was unnoticed by the girl. Something in her companion's eyes as he looked at her made her fearful. She knew that David Quinn was supposed to be in love with her; that he had followed her across the continent to Santa Barbara for no other reason. But instead of feeling flattered, she was conscious of a tiny spark of resentment—a resentment for which she chided herself. Why, indeed, should he not love her? He had a right to fall in love with any woman he might choose—and what if he was old enough to be her father? He was full of youth, still in his prime, interesting, thoroughly likable and fine. But in spite of the fact that she had known David Quinn for many years, ever since she was a child, she felt that she did not really know him—that there was a peculiar

something—a befogging veil, as it were—that partially hid him from her.

Young as she had been at the time, the memory of first seeing him still clung to her. It was on a December day—in her father's office. His hair had been white then as now, and that, together with the haunted, lost expression in his dark eyes, had strangely affected her baby heart. She had run to him and held her little flower face up for him to kiss, inspired by some divine longing to see the light of Christmas cheer in those sad eyes. And that light had come to his eyes, and always lurked there afterward whenever he looked at her. Twelve years ago it was, that December day when she had given him that kiss; and now she was a young woman, and David Quinn from an obscure clerk had risen to be a member of the great firm of which her own father was the senior partner. A warm glow stole over Miss Dacres; he had told her once that it had been her baby's kiss that had given him the impetus, the courage to achieve.

She swept him a fleeting glance. He was looking down at her, in his eyes the expression she had grown to dread. A chill of miserable doubt flooded away the warm glow of pride in him. Those baby lips of twelve years ago had now ripened to a woman's. Could she lift them to his in the betrothal kiss? It was a perplexing question for Emily Dacres. Her real regard for him could not be that love which triumphs above all things. Such a love must be born of a complete oneness between them, and such a oneness could not be—while the veil of mystery shrouding him befogged her vision of the inner man.

They found seats under a great rustling fan palm, close to the bandstand. The musicians were going through the usual preparatory adjusting and tuning peculiar to their respective instruments, a proceeding which invariably delighted Miss Dacres. So now, sitting under the giant palm, within sound of the breakers' roar, and listening to the soft melody of notes, her vivacity returned.

As she laughingly bantered with her

companion, she gradually became aware that they were both under surveillance. A woman sitting next to Quinn was staring at him quite beyond the point of good manners. The girl's chatter faltered. What was the matter with the woman? Why did she stare so? And why was her face so deathly white? Puzzled and disturbed, Miss Dacres looked at Quinn in wonder, but he seemed oblivious to the strange woman's interest. And then she met the direct gaze of a young bandsman seated in the front row. For an instant his eyes held hers, then she turned away, annoyed at herself for her involuntary response. She presently found herself studying him furtively. Like his fellow bandsmen, he was an Italian, but unlike them, he sat silent and dreamy, taking no part in their chatter. His gaze again held her, and this time Miss Dacres was acutely conscious of a distinct shock. What was it about him that drew her so irresistibly? She had a vague feeling that in some strange manner their lives touched, yet she was sure that she had never seen him before. Impatient at her unaccountable interest in an unknown bandsman, she shrugged away her fancies and turned to Quinn.

"I want you to notice that man," she said lightly, "the piccolo man."

Something was wrong with the piccolo man. He knew it, and his fellow bandsmen knew it. Also Cricelli, the choleric bandmaster, knew it and was furious—but not beyond the point of indignant speech when allowed that outlet to his feelings by the intermission.

"It's the tune," explained the young bandsman unhappily. "It's driving me mad. It is like a beautiful spirit, caged in darkness, imploring, begging for freedom. My brain whirls; I can't see my notes—I can't see you!"

"What tune?" gasped the astounded leader. "Mother of music—what drivels is this?"

"Ah, if I only knew!" cried the piccolist. "It beats—beats—beats in my breast, and won't come out. Ever since I was a babe in arms it has been with me, but it won't come out—it won't come out!"

"You're ill," said the bandmaster anxiously.

"No, no! Not ill. It's the tune, I tell you. But how can I expect you to understand? That is why I have never spoken of it—even to my mother. Only today it—"

He was interrupted by a woman, the same dark-eyed woman who had so aroused Miss Dacres's wonder by her strange interest in David Quinn.

"Pasquale," she said anxiously, "you are ill?"

He looked at her wildly. "Ah, mother, if it would only come out of me!" he cried. "This tune that hovers so dimly in the back of my mind—just beyond reach of expression! When I was a babe in your arms I knew it was there—but you would never sing it to me. I would cry and cry and beat my little fists—but you never understood, and would sing me other songs, croon other lullabies—but never that one."

The woman turned white. "You never told me of—this," she stammered, with a quick intake of the breath.

The piccolo man made the suggestive hopeless gesture of his race and turned away. The woman followed him. "Pasquale," she said in a dry whisper, touching his arm. "I know the tune."

He wheeled on her. "Know my tune! Impossible! Human ears have never heard my tune—it is yet unborn."

"You are wrong, Pasquale," she answered gently. "Human ears—mine—and—one other's—have heard it." Her grasp on his arm tightened. "Come; we will walk on the sands—I have something to tell you."

"I can't believe it," muttered the piccolo man, walking by her side like one in a daze. "It awoke within my soul when I was born, yet my own ears have not heard."

His mother smiled sadly. "My son, again you are wrong. This tune that won't come out of you—this tune that strives for expression—awoke in your soul when you were yet my unborn babe. I sang it to you in the joy of your coming, and—you heard. Ah, my child, it is beautiful, that tune, for it was inspired by love—your father's and mine."

The last time I saw your father he played it on his piccolo—now yours; and afterward he took me in his arms and said"—she shivered—"I remember still what he said: 'You are the inspiration, Lucia—you—your happiness—our wonderful happiness. It shall be for our ears alone—ours and—'" She broke off, a sob in her throat.

Pasquale stopped short. "Born of love?" he whispered.

She nodded, too overcome to speak.

"Then it shall be twice born," said the piccolo man, half to himself. His face lighted. "I understand now," he cried; "I know why the tune clamors so for life! I know why it throbs and throbs within me today!"

She tightened her clasp on his arm. "Why?"

"I've seen the woman I am to love," said the piccolo man.

His mother trembled. "Who? The beautiful American girl sitting next to the white-haired man?"

The young bandsman started. "You know?" he stammered. "How did you know?"

"I guessed," replied the woman. She spoke wearily. "I watched you—and her. But, Pasquale, you mustn't love her—what good can come of it?"

He laughed softly. "What good? I don't know. It's enough for me to know that to love is to be inspired; that to love is to create, and that through love my tune—my beautiful tune—shall at last have life."

His mother was white to the lips. "No!" she said vehemently. "I don't want the lullaby to be born again. Once I longed for the time when I could croon it into your little infant ears, but after you came I tried to forget it. I hated it."

"Hated it!" Her son stared.

"Yes. I never sang it to you, and you cried and cried so, and I used to wonder why. Now I know that it was because it was born with you." She paused; her breath came in little gasps. "Pasquale, that man—that white-haired man sitting with that beautiful American girl you say you shall love is—*your father*."

"Yes," she went on hysterically, "he is your own father, alive and well and rich. He left me one night—before you were born; left me with words of love on his lips; and from that hour I have never seen him or heard of him until I saw him this afternoon—making love to your beautiful American girl."

Her hand trembled on his arm; she swayed slightly, and had he not supported her, would have fallen, so weak was she from emotion.

"He left me twenty-four years ago—cruelly left me and his unborn child," she panted. "I had nowhere to turn, no relative to help; I was alone. Can you wonder then—can you wonder that I hate his memory—that I hate his lullaby?"

"Mother," said the young bandsman, deeply moved, "there's been some ghastly mistake. Are you sure of this? Are you certain that he deserted you?"

"I said I had never heard a word of him, but I did in a way once. A few months after he disappeared I had a letter from an American named Hatton, who had visited us at the villa in Messina, saying he had seen him in South America. My husband, however, denied his name, denied having a wife and denied having ever met Mr. Hatton before."

"It's all a horrible mistake, a horrible mistake," repeated her son. He passed his hand over his brow as if in an effort to think more clearly. "My father did not desert you—and me," he went on presently. "Some terrible thing happened to him, I am certain—" He broke off and again passed his hand across his brow.

"Mother," he whispered in a voice filled with awe, "it was not love for the American girl as I thought. It was my father sitting there, the father whom I had never seen, to whom my love went out. That is why the tune clamored so this afternoon as it had not done before. It is his tune, and he—he is my father."

"He's forgotten me," moaned the woman, "forgotten you and me. He's in love with that girl—I could see it in

him." She covered her eyes, her face now flushed, now white, as shame and distress alternately seized her.

"It's not his fault," persisted the boy stubbornly. "If it were his fault he would be a wicked man, and I know my father is not a wicked man."

"How do you know?" whispered his mother. "Oh, if you should be right!"

"Because," he answered joyfully, "because the tune called to *him*. I thought it called to the girl, but it must have been to the man—my father—its creator. So he is not wicked—he did not desert us—I am sure—else the tune would not have called to *him*."

"Ah, God!" she said tremulously. "I pray that you may be right, my son. But you must hurry back to the plaza. Cricelli will be angry if you are late—and you have a solo."

The bandmaster had his doubts about the solo. "You're not fit," he argued crossly.

"I'm all right," protested the piccoloist. "The numbness has gone; my head is as clear as a bell cast from the purest metals." He took his seat, his dark eyes glowing, and blew softly into his little instrument. "Ah," he muttered under his breath, "I will play—*play!*"

He looked eagerly at the shifting crowd, wondering if the white-haired man who was his father was still there—and the beautiful American girl. Yes—they were there!

His burning gaze again held Emily Dacres's attention. She moved uneasily and turned to her companion. "I wish," she exclaimed petulantly, "that piccolo man wouldn't stare so. It makes me feel—well, queer."

Quinn glanced carelessly at the object of her displeasure. "The fellow *does* stare," he agreed, annoyance in his voice. Then, as Miss Dacres had done, he, too, stirred uneasily.

She noticed the involuntary start. "He's a hypnotist," she laughed.

"I don't know," said David Quinn in a bewildered voice. A dark flush was on his face, a curiously lost look in his eyes. "I felt for a moment as if I were a ghost—an unreal thing. I—I—"

He paused helplessly; the dark flush gave place to a ghastly pallor.

"You're unwell, David," said Miss Dacres, alarmed. "Let us go back to the hotel." She half rose from her seat.

"No," said David Quinn in a strange voice, "no—the piccolo man is going to play."

The piccolo solo was well received, much to Cricelli's gratification. He beamed upon the applauding crowd and upon his piccoloist. "You are, after all, my incomparable Pasquale!" he cried, and raised his baton for an encore.

But the piccolo man stood as one seeing a vision. He heeded not his leader's signal. In front of him the great crowd swayed, but he was as unconscious of its presence as if it had not been. Only one face he saw, the face of a white-haired man.

"My tune—my tune," he whispered; "it beats—it implores—it calls out to him—its creator! Ah, his eyes are on mine; he hears—his soul hears—and now it shall be born again!"

He put the piccolo to his lips. A ripple of mellow silver notes stole upon the air. Instantly the restless crowd hushed to a magic stillness. Sweet and pure the heart clutching melody soared, its clear delicacy heightened by the deep boom of the distant surf. It was a quaint little air, a cradle song, crooning, beautiful and tender. It held the listeners with a grip that brought tears, and well it might, for it had its birth with the dawning of Pasquale's soul.

"'Tis the tune," muttered the astounded bandmaster. "Mother of music, what a tune!"

And so did the piccolo man at last play the tune—the tune that was a part of himself; and as he played, David Quinn rose from his seat, his face white as death, his arms outstretched, his eyes fastened on the player.

"David!" whispered Emily Dacres. "David!" She looked at him, frightened and wondering.

He seemed not to hear. He was alone with the past, groping—groping.

The last silver crooning note faded, and then came one long drawn-out cry—awful in its patheticness: "Lucia!"

It was David Quinn. He staggered forward blindly.

The distracted Miss Dacres saw the mysterious woman rise swiftly from her seat and dart toward him—heard her answering cry: “Antonio!”

But David Quinn had fainted.

“Who are you?” asked the girl fiercely, falling on her knees by the side of the unconscious man.

“I’m Lucia,” sobbed the woman brokenly. “This man is my husband—Count Branchi.”

“And my father,” came another voice in an awed whisper. And the piccolo man knelt and pillowed the white head upon his arm.

“An extraordinary case,” said the hotel physician to Emily Dacres that night as they strolled in the *loggia*. “Beaten on the head and shanghaied. He left his wife one evening, twenty-four years ago, to be gone but a short time. The next thing he remembers is waking as from a deep sleep to find

himself on board a sailing ship bound for Buenos Aires, his memory as to the past a complete blank, even his identity lost.”

Miss Dacres shuddered. “I suppose that explains his white hair. It was so when I first knew him, twelve years ago. But he’s all right now, you think?”

“Oh, yes. Of course it was a shock, you know—going back to where he left off twenty-four years ago.” The doctor laughed. “He says that as he paid so high a price for the name of David Quinn he will not give it up. It seems that when the captain discovered that he had lost his identity he gave him the ship’s name—David Quinn.”

Miss Dacres marveled. “To think,” she mused, “of that little lullaby lifting the veil that hid him from himself! It’s all so queer.”

“Ah,” said the old doctor, nodding his head, “there are many things we call queer that we do not understand.” And he fell silent.



SUNSET

By Marion Dorothea Shainwald

I SAW the passing of an eastern day,
 When all the heart of nature beat with joy
 That yet another span of God's great work
 Was finished, and the world might sleep again,
 And lo, the circle of the setting sun
 Was like a bee shut out from Paradise,
 That stung the west into a crimson death
 And vainly sought an entrance back again,

But had the blood of daylight in its heart,
 And all the peace of twilight on its face.
 While night and day had joined lovers' lips
 And kissed the world to peace from fretfulness,
 I heard the murmur of a distant sea
 And hearkened to creation's evening prayer,
 And bending down my head I prayed to God
 To send my soul the peace of twilight, too.

THE SUBTERFUGES OF THE SOLITARY

By Martha G. D. Bianchi

HALDENE came of a family who, while playing their parts in the thick of society, had always stood more or less committed to an unrequited passion for solitude. The four sons had a way of going off on tangents of their own, hunting in odd places, exploring winding rivers down South where only Providence and alligators could possibly interrupt them, or turning up from remote corners of the far East. They had been reported as lost in the interior of Tibet, murdered by gipsies in Spain, and dropped in mid-channel from English balloons, yet they always turned up smiling again, to scoff at the fume made by outsiders over their absence. Even when Emery Haldene disappeared for two years and returned, having lived the life of an Arab with a Bedouin that took his fancy, the family reserved comment, merely expressing a decent concern and subsequent satisfaction.

The second son, Roger, had wandered less than his brothers in actual wilds, but he had the inherent taste for occasional solitude like most men. He was not by nature eccentric, being an absolutely normal specimen of mankind with a keen taste for companionship, but his male aversion for a question and a questioner was undoubted and sincere. In spite of which qualifying weakness, he rarely resorted to the ready lie when questioned, though he did understand the value of a noncommittal silence, that silence at once so uncommunicative yet so sympathetic, that leaves the questioner wondering if he has questioned more than if he has been answered. Intrigue was as foreign to him as to some

happy animal, and he rarely troubled himself even to employ the evasive answer so much affected by his brother Jim when cornered. This peculiarity the family understood and fostered, being neither puzzled nor offended at it; and left to himself, he told one freely where he had been, and whom he had seen, and was a good gossip to his mother. Unless barbed on the provocative question he hated, or forced to explanation, he was candid and spontaneous, and never having felt constrained to account for himself or his mental whereabouts, he never realized the snares of subterfuge until convention and the strictures of love and matrimony laid their triple hands and alien bonds upon him. It was his engagement to a girl he had scarcely known long enough to be sure it was she the first time he met her on the street transformed by hat and furs, that waked him to the facts in regard to his imperiled individuality. His only apparent qualm, as he shared a bottle of Scotch with his friend Alwayrd in their wonted corner of the Blithian Club a few nights previous to his marriage, was a haunting fear of regret for his bartered bride, his random Mistress Solitude.

"My only dread of this being eternally two is lest I give out," he explained confidentially, sure of Alwayrd's comprehension. "If I could get off alone sometimes for a little—" He paused suggestively, as if to be reassured.

"I have often had that same notion," said Alwayrd, unfortunately taking just the wrong tack, "but it is a queer idea for you to be playing with at this stage of the game, is it not?"

"If a man could go away sometimes for a week—" Haldene began again vaguely.

"Married men never go out between the acts," scoffed Alwayrd.

"But if I should have the feeling come over me that I really had to go?"

His expression had suddenly grown so wistful that the listener laughed outright.

"Have an interval between drinks, you mean?" he asked gaily; but Roger failed to respond.

"My theory is," he began again seriously, "that a man and a woman could have no end of a life together, if they went on being the two people that fell in love with each other. But how can any individuality stand out against this eternal oneness that seems to be expected of them?"

This sounded so nearly reasonable that Alwayrd hastened to offer some stanch platitudes in encouragement—a sort of first aid to the hesitant. It was nothing new to him to strengthen bachelor knees on their way to the altar. He was almost a "best man" by profession. In response to Haldene's dejected repetition of, "If I knew I could get away when I wanted to, probably I might not care to," Alwayrd cried perfidiously:

"Oh, you won't want to!"

"It may wear off," admitted Haldene. "Jim has settled down, and I may forget about wanting to get away."

"You will be as confirmed a two as ever went into Noah's ark in pretty pairs by the time I see you next!" insisted Alwayrd. "You are no lunatic, if you *are* Jim's brother; and Virginia is very lovely." He sighed appropriately.

"Yes—she is," said Haldene dispassionately, "but—"

"She is a comprehending sort, too."

"Yes," agreed Haldene again, "of course, but—"

"She is a man's girl, too. That helps out."

"Yes, but women are different about wanting to be alone." He shook his head despondently as he declared it.

"What do you mean? Of course they are afraid of things. That is only natural."

"I did not mean that at all," said Haldene slowly. "Not just that—but they are terribly dependent, I am afraid. Shadows of us, I mean. They are always wanting to be with one, or to know where one is going to be, if they are not."

"Apt to," nodded Alwayrd in turn; "I have sisters of my own. Women are all tyrannical. That is the reason I have never wanted one sitting around in my life."

"They don't seem to allow for any margin. They want to be your men friends and your wife and all your habits! At least I have gathered as much already from my brief experience as a chattel," sighed Haldene.

"I suspect they forget pretty often that the Scriptures recommend them to be all things to all men, not to one man," said Alwayrd. They laughed guiltily. It was treason of course, or at least *lèse majesté* they were committing against the dearer sex. They knew it. It made them a trifle uneasy, like children who mock hardily at ghosts within hearing of a country churchyard.

"You will get used to it. You will even like it," predicted Alwayrd, recovering himself first. "And what is more, you will find Virginia will understand. I knew her rather well once myself. She is one of a quadrillion of girls. She does not mind smoking, and she has not asked you to drop one of your pet indulgences. Trust her. She is something of a sport herself in a high bred, lofty sort of way. Does she know how you feel about this?"

"I have hinted a little about it," Haldene confessed unenthusiastically.

"How did she take it?"

"She said, why, of course, all married people wanted to be alone—together." He blushed so furiously, Alwayrd came near laughing aloud at the predicament.

"And then?" he asked, retaining his gravity with difficulty.

"Oh, I tried to explain the psychology of it to her—that is, the necessity of intervals of complete reaction. I demonstrated it by physics first. Then I followed it up by saying a man's mind needed freedom for development, and all that sort of general argument."

"Was she convinced?"

"She seemed to feel rather left out. She said: 'By alone, do you mean without me?' And I—"

"Yes, go on; what did you do?" Alwayrd was leaning forward eagerly as he inquired.

"I did—well, I did what you would have done. I did that instead of saying anything more about it."

"Of course, you did! I knew you did!" jeered Alwayrd. "But what did you say?"

"I did not say anything; at least, I did not mean to say anything."

"And that satisfied her?"

"No; she repeated her question, and—"

"You must have said *something*, Roger! She never would let you off that way. That is not Virginia. What did you actually say?"

"I said: 'Oh, no, not without you, of course,'" Haldene replied, looking the culprit he felt.

Alwayrd nodded quickly. "I thought so," he said. "That is what they all do. But you are wrong there on the start. The only way is to have a perfectly frank understanding about all this. Talk it out with her, as if she were a man!"

"Perhaps you are right, but I know I shall never dare mention it again. It made a coward of me," Haldene sighed, with his eyes on his empty glass.

"Man is to starve no normal demand of his nature," Alwayrd quoted glibly.

"I know Virginia would never consider this a normal demand of my nature," Haldene confessed, "but it is the sixth sense to me, and I despair of making a woman see it that way. If she is big enough to take my word for it and trust me—but will she? Would any woman?"

"You can be sure Virginia will never be jealous of any woman, if that is what you mean," said Alwayrd. "She knows her own supremacy too well for that!"

Haldene resented the insinuation. His next remark showed it. "That is indisputable," he said. "We were speaking of the intrusion of a tendency."

"Well, a man must have freedom," Alwayrd asserted briskly, for the mo-

ment fully reconciled to his own desireless lot. Then, noting Haldene's genuine depression, he changed his tone to one of hollow encouragement.

"Stop thinking about all that part of it," he urged. "There is always a margin of sheer fascination to allow for. You are crossing bridges before you come to them in a land where you may never hear the distant ripple of a river."

But though Haldene talked no more of his apprehension, he was not altogether at ease with himself or his future. For weeks after their marriage it seemed to him he had been riding at windmills. Their life together beggared his lonely imagination. He had never known or guessed much concerning women, and the mere succession of days brought him exquisite emotions, fragile thrills and frosty sparkles in his blood, or the overwhelming sweetness flooding both mind and body with miraculous content. It was so perfect that, being something of an Epicurean, he suddenly wanted to dally with his joy—to be uncertain, to tempt desire toward gratification, to hold up the glass for the color and bouquet of the wine before draining it. He realized he had ceased to taste. His pleasure was too spendthrift, too breathless. He knew he was quite mad about Virginia. He gloried in it. But his hour had struck, when he had to be alone. Her gay, "Are you there, Roger?" or her dear knack of always being there herself prevented every possibility of the outlet his nature was craving. One afternoon she found him staring into the fire too intently to hear her tender challenge. She shivered slightly, smitten with a fear.

"Why?" he asked her, as he drew her toward him. But she had not cared to say that his encircling arm seemed less to include her than restrain her from his preoccupation. Was he holding something closer in his heart than her own upon it?

He turned away soon, murmuring something about needing a breath of air. She would have followed him, when, to her confusion, he kissed her hand, saying, "*Au revoir, chérie. Au bientôt!*"

"Oh!" she said blankly. "Is it an engagement you have to keep, dear?"

"Partially," he replied indifferently, though his heart beat faster for this first prevarication.

"I see; I thought you meant just our usual constitutional."

"It is a constitutional—in a way," he parried.

"But then—" Her eyes questioned deeply.

"I have something on my mind I must think out," he continued rapidly.

"Oh, if that is all! But you always think so much better when I am with you."

"Yes, of course—always; but tonight I had half promised to meet a man," he qualified, not looking toward her. She sat down. The happy eagerness faded with her smile.

"If it is an engagement, Roger, why, of course—" Her hand reached for her book as though that settled it.

Haldene wavered. "Well, he may not turn up after all, but I said—"

"I suppose it is Mr. Alwayrd. Bring him home to dinner, and I will telephone Louise."

"I don't believe he could come," objected Haldene, knowing nothing more of Alwayrd's location than a fallen star. "The fact is, I may not get home to dinner on time myself tonight. I may be kept downtown."

"You mean downtown with Mr. Alwayrd?"

"I may; it is a possibility."

"But if you could dine downtown with him, he might as well dine uptown with you!" she triumphed. "So I will ring up Louise at once. She likes Peter Alwayrd"

"You had better not expect him," he called back, as he stepped out into the alluring dusk alone.

To what had he committed himself? He felt in honor bound to call up Alwayrd from the nearest drug store, and of course as he did not want him, he got him without delay. Alwayrd was charmed to dine with them. He walked out of the telephone booth into George Gregory just back from his Montana mines, and together they continued uptown.

"Where are you bound?" asked Gregory.

"To keep an engagement," muttered Haldene.

"I'll walk along with you a bit," said Gregory. "I'm glad enough to get back on top of the ground and see someone I know."

At the Plaza Haldene made a stand for freedom. Excusing himself, with a cordial assurance of welcome at any future time from Virginia and himself, he hurried into the hotel.

As he crossed the office on his way out by a side entrance, a woman's voice saluted him, trailed after him, overtook him. They had known each other before either had been married. Before Haldene was aware of her intention, he had been drawn into drinking tea, and the waiters were already serving them in the palmiest of bridal corners. It balked him objectionably, but the lifelong rules of social usage were implacable. Tea he must have before he went. Excusing himself as soon as civility permitted, there was still time for a turn in the park alone with his intimate thoughts—or were they reminiscent emotions? The solitary interval was almost his, when a motor car drew up at the curb barring his progress, and his brother Jim's voice hailed him imperatively.

"Just get in here, will you, Roger, and take Lucy's sister down to the ferry," he said.

"I am overdue now at a postponed meeting of the directors of the company. We put it at a confoundedly odd hour to oblige Neely. He goes West tonight at seven thirty-two." And before Roger could protest, he was in and Jim was out, and the car was moving southward in the press of vehicles, leaving more than ample opportunity for a continuous conversation. The girl seemed agreeable to the transfer.

"Awfully good of you!" she cried, with a leading glance from her hat brim to his eyes. "I did so hate the idea of running down to the ferry alone. Don't you hate to travel alone, with no one to talk to?"

"I don't know," said Haldene.

She threw him another bright upward

glance. "Why, you happy man! Do you never have to?"

"Never," said Haldene with unnecessary conviction.

"Well, I may meet someone I know, of course—" she began.

"There's not the least doubt of that," he agreed.

"Yes, I almost always do. I am lucky about that. I used to have Lucy, but now she always has Jim. Oh, I forgot! You are married, are you not? So you always have someone to be with you too!"

"Yes," said Haldene.

"That is the one great advantage of matrimony," she admitted with a reluctant air.

"If you call it an advantage," Haldene suggested, remembering his afternoon.

"Why, of course I do! Nobody wants to do things alone. What is there to do alone? One cannot talk to oneself, and then it is so nice to have someone always about. When I marry I shall never let the man out of my sight. I shall simply spoil him!"

Haldene sat up very stiffly. "Do all women feel like that?" he asked.

"Of course. Do not all men? If not, why do they marry? Really nice men, I mean, not explorers or artists with queer temperaments. Now you, for example—does it not seem too wonderful, to a lonely creature like you, to get away from your dreary bachelor life and have lovely Virginia always with you?"

"Of course," Haldene echoed flatly, while deep in his own mind sank the confirmation of his gloomiest fears. Probably all women were alike. Then again he wondered if they were.

So it chanced that Virginia, dashing round the corner to select her especial shade of orchids for the dinner table, noticed Jim's big motor jerk to a halt and leap forward, bearing Roger and a strange girl inside. The inevitable succession of feminine mental phenomena ensued. Louise, arriving on time for dinner, found her hostess alone, and Alwayrd, following, was forced to chat for two until the delinquent Haldene turned up at the fish course, still clad in

his afternoon coat. The only reference Virginia made to any departure from precedent was her casual remark: "Mr. Alwayrd was done with your engagement first, it seems!"

"I was unexpectedly detained," Roger remarked to whom it might concern, and plunged into general conversation. He hated to be what he called "followed up," and he felt that Virginia was not quite herself either. Dinner was impersonally exploited until dessert, when Alwayrd asked offhand: "Where were you when you called me up to come to dinner, Roger? Your voice sounded as if it was coming from Mars."

The glance Virginia rested upon him for a moment before she spoke was that of the domesticated recording angel.

"Then you did not meet, after all, this afternoon?" she suggested sweetly.

"No; I am never in town until evening the first three days of the week. I got in early just by chance today," said Alwayrd. And so Haldene stood for conviction—stood, indeed, already convicted of prevarication in the first degree.

It was Louise who, aware of a slowing social pulse, warded off the impending pause with, "Your company has a plant on Long Island, has it not? And that reminds me of Nina Jackson, who used to live down there. I met her on my way out to the cab tonight. You knew she was married and living at the Plaza? But of course you did, Mr. Haldene, for she said you had just left her. She felt it was quite an adventure for a bride and groom to be drinking tea together without their legal guardians before the honeymoon of either was really out of the sky."

"I went in there to get rid of a man, and ran across her in the lobby," said Roger tersely.

"I thought the usual excuse, when a man went where he most wanted to go, was that he had to meet a man!" she taunted roguishly.

"That is a pick-me-up you are talking about," struck in Alwayrd.

"It was a let-me-go I was trying to negotiate," said Roger bitterly. "Everything I met stuck to me like a burr. I

no sooner got rid of one man than another was on my track—"

"What were you trying to do yourself?" asked Alwayrd; but Louise interrupted him:

"That is always what happens when I want to receive some especially attractive man!" she cried. "Everybody comes and spoils it!"

Virginia said nothing.

"Out with it!" persisted Alwayrd. "What were you up to, and where were you bound? I met George Gregory, and he said you shook him to keep an engagement with me."

Louise's eyebrows went up quizzically. "And Nina swore you only left her to keep an engagement with—"

But Alwayrd cut her off with: "What reason did he give for leaving you at the start, Virginia?"

"I decline to be cross-questioned. A wife is not bound to incriminate her husband," she reminded him reprovingly.

"Out with your alibi, Roger!" persisted his tormentor. "What was your engagement, and where were you going?" And for some inexplicable reason Haldene was unwilling to explain or confide or defend. For a perfectly irrational moment he longed for a cactus crawling desert; he felt himself alien to them all, and even Virginia enlisted against him.

"The Gaiety Theater is calling Mr. Alwayrd, to say that the seats he ordered are available," announced the butler, and mercifully cut short further examination of the culprit.

Now in the relations of men and women distrust is the only element that is absolutely vital, absorbing, sleepless, undying. It may be only a living torment, but at least it is alive. Accordingly the relations of the Haldenes advanced a distinct stage. They were less unstudied, more self-conscious, of a subtlety not lacking in interest for them both. For some weeks Haldene held his propensities in check. Virginia asked him nothing, so he was spared attempts at explanation; and the thought that she might be suffering from his inadvertent adventure with his brother Jim's wife's

sister, never crossed the outer rim of his dreams. It was not until his "week off" began to haunt him that Alwayrd's last resort of perfect frankness occurred to him favorably. He made an innocent opportunity for general exchange of opinion, and was met by Virginia with a disarming brightness of understanding.

To his brisk general statement, "A man has to get off alone sometimes," she asked, also with a display of general interest only: "Does he? Why?"

"Oh, it is his native element, I suppose," Haldene replied. "It comes down to him from his aboriginal ancestry. It is a tendency left over from that lonely hunting and fishing of the wild men of the forests."

"But you don't have to hunt champagne or fish for mushrooms, fortunately," she objected, with a gay little smile, forsaking the impersonal argument shamelessly.

"In a way I do," he dissented.

"Well, suppose you did ever go off alone—just suppose it; of course you would not really—what would you want to do in your freedom?"

"I should not want to do anything," he said bravely. "I should want to feel alone."

She grew grave at once. "Your emotion is spent and you want a new inspiration, Roger?" She had never feared a calamity like this.

"I mean, I sometimes want to feel alone," he repeated. "Men cannot live at short focus the way women like to. It blights their imagination."

"How very strange!" she exclaimed. "None of our family ever felt that way."

"It is really quite a mild affliction, compared with some you might have married into," he said gently. "I might have had even worse vices. I might drink or set fires or be a Socialist—" Her eyes were mystified, and he went on deprecatingly: "Men are lonely creatures at best; they often don't know how to explain it themselves, and they try to answer questions and then give it up and say anything that occurs to them."

"You do not imply that I ever ask you questions, do you?" Oh, she was

hurt! There was no doubt of it now, though she made no open reproach.

"Of course not, darling!" Haldene protested. "But all eyes that love, pry. And to save them pain or disillusion, say, costs a man many inventions, or at least lies of expression—trying to even up to the expectation of him, I mean."

She looked even more confused. "But you would not want my eyes not to love you, would you?"

"Silly angel, no! I just want the freedom to be sad or glad or grouchy without having you suppose it stands for something tremendous, some vital element in character or happiness."

"I see—my presence smothers you," she said thoughtfully.

"It prisons me," he began eagerly, delighted to prove her quick comprehension. "I am always afraid to estrange that beautiful brooding tenderness of yours. No man is worth what a woman gives him, Virginia! No woman ought to care for any man as you women all do for—" He broke off helplessly, feeling how badly he was putting his case.

"I would not voluntarily confine your thoughts, any more than I would your actions," she said with a slight increase of dignity, remembering her vision of him in Jim's motor with that inexplicable girl beside him.

"No, I know that," he assured her quickly. "But if I happen to be just myself and not your ideal of me for a little, you attribute it to a wearied heart or a fickleness entirely foreign to my nature."

"When a man begins to weary of a woman, one pretext serves as well as another," she said, with an exasperating little shrug. "I am not used to men who are tired of me. You must pardon me for not sooner recognizing the symptoms." He saw there was no hope of talking it out with her. Alwayrd's suggestion was a blind alley.

Like most men of vagrant literary inspiration, Haldene had all his life kept one room sacred to his mood, uninvaded by the rest of the world. To this unwritten law Virginia became, of course, the exception. He wanted her there

with him; he found himself listening for her coming with an odd mixture of distracted anticipation and foreboding, but it was not long before he surprised his father and himself by taking an office downtown, where, as he put it, he could attend to his practical affairs. Haldene Senior was delighted. He did not, however, quite fathom the look Roger gave him when he offered to spend part of every morning with him in the interests of the rapidly growing family estate. Nor did he see why his son refused to put his name upon the office door. "How is anybody ever to find you?" he demanded. To which Roger replied: "I shall not want a lot of loafers dropping in on me at first," an objection as plausible as any he happened to think of at the moment.

The first time he found himself locked in alone, he stood and stared straight before him. The magic of a key was in his blood. During the two solitary hours that ensued the door was repeatedly tried in vain, and the music of retreating footsteps charmed his ears. He went home more keenly himself than for weeks preceding. From the initiation of this oft repeated desertion, his feeling for Virginia intensified. It was not the devotion of guilty disloyalty he poured out upon her, but the perfect whole of which his unhindered powers were capable. He called the volume of essays he was slowly completing, "Alone." He felt that it might prove to be a little masterpiece in its way. He knew men would understand it and women would not read it—in which his safety lay. It was dedicated to Virginia, together with his inmost being where her spirit was enshrined.

The first New Year's Eve after their marriage put their mutual understanding to the test. They had declined supper with insistent friends just for the exquisiteness of coming home from the Opera to watch the old year out alone, together. Virginia had already left the library and gone to her own room. He heard her light step passing and repassing as she came and went. He had no intention of delaying, but as he turned off the last light he dropped into the

great chair before the fire with conscious satisfaction. The logs had burned down until the fire glowed, quivering like petals of a flower dropping one by one. A blue flame leaped ethereal above, then sank. The intimacy of the situation was delicious. Why could Virginia never understand what it meant to him to sit and dream like this over her, instead of always having her actually beside him? He was sure she would give him so much more—everything, with utter prodigality. "But she cannot realize what it is to one of my breed to be alone!" he said aloud. He was frightened lest he had been overheard. He agreed silently with himself that his evasions had become more frequent, had become almost normal. His glibness startled him in retrospect; though he had nothing really to conceal, the evasive answer seemed to be constantly hovering on his tongue, for he would not wound her and he could not deny himself. The hour struck and struck again. He had unwittingly watched the old year out alone. Their first New Year together!

It was almost two o'clock when Virginia, with accusing eyes, slipped into the room and stood motionless as if to assure herself he was not dead. He chanced to glance away from the fire into the shadow as she watched him.

"Roger, what is the matter? Have you been asleep? I waited and waited!" she began.

"I was just coming—coming to you," he protested, rising as he spoke and wondering at her displeasure.

"But what has kept you here all this time? What are you doing?"

"Nothing."

"What have you been thinking, then?"

"I was not exactly thinking."

"Well, what has kept you here for hours alone in the dark?"

"Just feeling," he said; but she interrupted him with—

"Have you the least idea what time it is now?"

He opened his arms in sudden longing. He was more hers than ever before. What her lips lacked in warmth, his supplied in craving.

"Why did you go away?" she whispered.

"For the joy of coming back, partly."

At last she sighed: "Feeling as you do, I do not see why you ever married." And to Haldene the difficulty seemed as hopeless as if Adam were called upon to demonstrate to his lovely and inexplicable Eve why the fruit of the tree would not agree with her.

"Why *did* you marry?" she entreated.

"Because I thought about you so incessantly I could not do anything else until I did."

"You seemed happy, at first," sadly.

"Not half so impressed with the divine luck and possibility of it all as I am tonight!" His eyes were splendid, and she believed them.

"Let me be perfectly open with you, Roger," she begged. "This leaving me out hurts me. It is bad enough to have you happy at all without me. I am never happy away from you."

"I never am away from you when I am alone," he protested.

Her eyes doubted.

"I cannot understand it—this dreadful thing that is coming between us," she continued. "You are gone for hours sometimes in the morning, and Mr. Gregory and Mr. Alwayrd can never find you at your office. And there are other mysteries you seem to prefer to keep to yourself." She paused, too proud to refer directly to that girl in Jim's motor.

"What on earth has there been to explain?" he cried bluntly.

"Oh, this secretive habit is hopeless!" she exclaimed, as if to an invisible third party.

"I secretive?" he gasped.

"I could find excuse for any fault if you were honest with me about it," she admitted. "It is your wanting to deceive me—your other self, your inner self really—that hurts!"

"I am as honest as I know how to be," said poor Haldene. She raised her hand as if to ward off his words.

"Don't, Roger, please don't! I would far rather you did not. It kills me to have you treat me like a curious outsider. I never ask, I never want to know what you prefer to conceal—only

for you to suppose I believe you at your office when no one can ever get in, or to be told you are obliged to keep an important engagement when you are off in Jim's motor—" Just here light flashed on the darkened male understanding, but he let her go on. "Of course men do lie to their wives—some wives deserve it; but it is so miserably vulgar, so out of our world. However, I am ready to forgive everything unasked if you will promise in the new year to be entirely frank with me."

"But what is it you are going to forgive me for?" he asked stupidly. "What have I done?"

"I think we need not carry the discussion further," she said, withdrawing from him as she spoke. "Our ideas of mutual confidence are so different we shall hardly arrive at a happy conclusion. It is only unfortunate we discovered it too late."

"But you do not insist on my confessing myself a knave when I am not, do you? Is there no other form of frankness that will do as well?" he demanded.

"Oh, Roger, I have asked you not to keep up that tone of reserve with me!" she begged, as if his voice inflicted physical pain.

"Oh, if you want me to lie about it!" he flung out—and for a long instant he was tempted to invent a lurid double life and be rapturously forgiven.

"I only want you to know that I understand you have turned to your writing to make up for something I have failed to give you. I am sorry to stand in the way of some woman who might have filled your life," she said with sacrificial sweetness.

"It is not the writing, or any disillusion or nonsense about the other woman," he broke in. "There are lonely sides of a man's nature a woman cannot enter. Please, dear, try not to misunderstand!"

With one of her bewildering shifts of mood, she came close to him again, saying: "Trust me, then! Don't withhold your confidence!"

He made no outward recognition of her nearness. "No use. What you could not understand you would never

believe or condone," he complained. He looked so ill at ease that again she misunderstood him.

"Ah, then, my intuitions were right, after all! There is some shadow coming between us!" Instantly she resumed her original place in his arms, and throwing one of her own about him protectingly, cried: "But no one will ever change my faith in you, any more than my love for you. Whatever scandal may be threatening us, I shall always maintain the King can do no wrong!" Still he failed to respond. Her hold weakened as she realized it. "This leaving me out is cruel!" she repeated, reverting to her old grievance.

"It has not been leaving you out. It has been weaving you in deeper than you can conceive," Haldene said slowly. "It is just this I despair of making you feel. Leaving you out! No, breathing you in as you do not dream. 'Closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet,'" he went on passionately. He closed his eyes. She felt his breath hot on her hair.

"I am losing you!" she protested.

"No, I am finding *you*."

"But you are separating our lives!"

"That I am not. I am making something of mine fit to offer you in proof of my love of you—the human worship of work that a man gives to one woman."

"But the condition of your doing it is that you must be alone—" She was not angry now; she was bewildered.

"You are mistaken again. I am not alone in this, for all I do or write is through me, but it is really you. I cannot explain it. It is a diviner mystery than any I ever encountered."

"You are writing a book then, in secret?" He nodded in acquiescence.

"Without telling even me! What is it to be called?"

"I have not decided."

"Well, what is it about?"

"You," he said without flinching.

Virginia clung to him silently. After a long pause she said:

"Don't you believe that two people who marry ought to be absolutely one?"

"I may believe it, but it is not true," he replied. "Any man or woman is pre-

destined to be eternally one—at least if they amount to enough for survival. We are born alone and we die alone. That is what the Almighty thinks about it."

She shivered at the revelation. "Are all men like that?" she asked.

"All men are not like any one thing. Men are different. I suppose women may be," he told her.

"I believe you love your ideal of me better than the real me," she whispered, yielding to the embrace that claimed her now with convincing reality. "Tell me, Roger, honestly, was it better to sit alone here all these wasted hours than as we are now, this way?" Her arms stole up about his neck. "Could you be happier alone, without me?" And again, like all brave and good men before him, he was a coward, as drawing her to him

in the imperious reaction of his strange nature's need, he answered unhesitatingly: "No, never without you!"

The alchemy of the situation was dispelled by the eternal question on her lips: "And you will drop all this cruel vagary about being alone, dear? And you will never allow yourself to indulge in these secretive moods again? You will always be perfectly honest with me and let me drive away these black butterflies?"

"Never! Always!" he promised, and only the fire saw the tragedy in his face.

He never quite told the truth again. He was not born to lie. He was not a liar bred, but he slipped deeper and deeper into the toils of harmless subterfuge every hour of his life, in defense of his misunderstood and all-understanding random Mistress Solitude.



LOVER'S NIGHT SONG

By Louis How

THE ebb of the night is dingy and cold,
The stars grow faint and the moon is old;
The false dawn somber and chill
Steals o'er the eastern hill.

*I trudge along in the dreary road,
Whistling an improvised tune of bliss,
For her promise is my heart's precious load,
And my lips are sweet with her kiss.*

Die, old moon, for the flush of day
Is deepening over the land.
You are destiny's plaything, anyway,
Moved and removed by his iron hand.

But I am the master of fate and her—
The mistress of fate and my future She—
Joint lords of destiny, for there stir
The whispers of heaven in her and me.

*So I push along in the heavy road,
Whistling my improvised hymn of bliss;
Her precious promise my light heart's load,
And my lips warm and sweet with her kiss.*

BACHELORETTE

By W. B. Kerr

A BACHELORETTE is a woman of uncertain age who has never committed matrimony. She has never stood up before a minister or a justice of the peace with her fingers crossed while she promised to obey a husband. No, indeed! She wouldn't even ask a man to marry her—not if he never got a wife!

Bachelorettes were formerly called old maids, but present day folk are more kind—also more cautious; a bachelorette is seldom a mollicoddle.

To be just, the term "old maid" does not now apply. A bachelorette may be old, but she refuses longer to look the part. She has learned that growing old is a habit—and a bad habit, too. So each New Year she swears off the habit and a few years off her age, and continues to look young and charming. It is real mean of her to cheat poor old Father Time in this shameless fashion, but she is utterly without conscience in the matter. When you reproach her for her duplicity, she merely says, "Pooh!"

There is still another reason why unmarried women have a right to object to the designation "old maid." It is uncomplimentary. The term came into use at a time when spinsterhood was usually involuntary, and presupposes a leftover or an undesirable; but there are now fifty-seven varieties of single women, and the man who presupposes anything about a bachelorette will probably have to guess again.

The query therefore arises: Why is a bachelorette? It might puzzle the bachelorettes themselves to explain, but no mere man will admit that he can't answer the question. If men were to confess there was anything they didn't know,

the number of bachelorettes would be greatly increased.

Roughly speaking, a woman may be a bachelorette for any old reason—because she doesn't like men, because she doesn't like poverty; because she wishes to be independent, because she is *too* independent; because the man she wanted died, or some other woman saw him first; because the man who wanted her wasn't a church member, or had hair that didn't match hers; because she dislikes being kissed by a man who hasn't shaved; because she is wedded to her art (whatever that means), and likewise—just because.

But to approach the problem in a logical way, there are two classes of bachelorettes—the willing and the unwilling. Some men profess to believe that the former do not exist, but let a Doubting Thomas be jilted and he is mightily convinced that there is one woman in the world who wouldn't marry the best man living. Let us first consider the willing class.

There was a time when women believed that husbands were a necessity—not only for support but for happiness. No woman dared be happy unless she had a husband to boss her and growl at her and keep her delightfully worried. But when the highly laudable desire of this country to create and support a millionaire aristocracy drove so many women into the ranks of the wage earners, these women discovered that a husband was not a financial necessity. From this it was but a step to the further discovery that it was possible for a woman to be reasonably happy—even though she didn't have a husband to find fault with her cooking and raise the roof

every time she bought a new hat. Some writer has said: "A vast number of women have emancipated themselves from the tradition that the most ambitious of all careers is matrimony, and will lead the full, varied lives of men."

So they do. They rise of a morning before they would like, bolt their breakfast, hurry to their work, hustle all day, drag wearily home to their supper and then tumble into bed. That is the "full, varied life" of most men, but because she is working single instead of double, the self-supporting woman imagines that she is free. To be sure, she is free from the bonds of matrimony, and if she is neither affectionate nor maternal, it is better so.

"There is an enormous percentage of non-maternal women," says a recent novel, "who will eventually reach the conclusion that the less they have to do with love the happier they will be."

Also, the happier the men they might have married will be, for many women who are unfitted for marriage have entered the wedded state simply because it was the fashion. Most women would rather die than be out of style, but now that husbands on the right arm are not being worn so extensively as heretofore, women who feel no need of a husband will have the courage to remain single.

But while many women honestly prefer a single life, the majority of bachelorettes are no doubt the unwilling sort. This does not mean that they have had no chance to marry. Some have received one or more offers, but have refused for cause. Possibly the cause was insufficient, but it is the nature of women to be particular. There are doubtless many bachelorettes who would have married long ago had not the Lord—by some strange oversight—neglected to create a few perfect men.

Others, however, are not so hard to please. They don't ask for a perfect man, but they would like one made to order. As a last resort, bachelorettes of this type have been known to accept a ready made man, and then have tried to remodel him after marriage, but they found it a harder job than making over an old dress.

Then there are bachelorettes who balk at the word "obey" in the marriage ceremony. It would be interesting to know just how many wives take the promise seriously and obey their husbands—except when it suits their convenience.

But the bachelorette who is *afraid* to marry has some justification for her fears. The records of the divorce courts and the alarming number of wife desertions show that matrimony is about as unsafe as aviating—with more unpleasant notoriety attached should your craft be wrecked. Then, too, the timid bachelorette often fears that she cannot support her husband in the style to which he has been accustomed. Imagine how a wife must feel when she knows that her poor husband is actually suffering for smoking tobacco, because she cannot earn enough at the washtub to supply him with this necessity! It is well for a bachelorette to have a few earnest thinks before she recklessly assumes the responsibilities of married life.

The saddest bachelorette is undoubtedly the one who got a man on the hook and then let him get away. Only a fisherman can appreciate her feelings. Perhaps she played with him too long, or tried to reform him. The time to begin reforming a man is when he is six weeks old, and the woman who undertakes the job after a man is of age will be gray-headed before the task is completed. And then the man will probably decide that he is too good for his reformer and marry some other woman.

It is also unwise to nag a man before marriage. There was the sad case of Aunt Mary, who nagged her lover until she drove him to drink, and then refused to marry him because he wasn't a teetotaler. You may have two guesses as to which made a lucky escape.

But there is one type of bachelorette who has the sympathy and respect of everyone—the girl who gives up her chances of marriage because of some duty she feels she owes to others. There would be fewer bachelorettes, too, were not some bachelors sacrificing themselves in like manner.

Last of all, we come to the "old maid"

bachelorette—the woman who is unmarried *only* because she is unattractive to men. And this does not necessarily mean that she is wanting in good looks or without domestic accomplishments. Think of the homely women who marry! The census enumerator was afraid to count them, but they are not so scarce that they are being exhibited in museums. As for the poor cooks, every day men are marrying women who can't fry an egg without the aid of a cookbook and a thermometer.

No, it isn't beauty nor talent nor morals nor domestic tastes that attract the men—not these things alone. A woman recently wrote to the editor of a New York paper for an explanation as to why the men wouldn't love her. She was called by her friends good and beautiful, could dance like a dream, was a fine housekeeper and could make two hundred dollars a month writing for the magazines; yet she couldn't capture a husband. She had literary talent to burn, but she lacked the talent for marrying. On the other hand, some women have an oversupply; and among the men, we have many illustrious examples of matrimonial genius, including Bluebeard, Nat Goodwin and Henry VIII.

"But what is it in a woman that attracts the men?" the "old maid" bachelorette will inquire. There are several questions easier to answer than this—including that famous query: "How old is Ann?"—but it is noticeable that the women who are most attractive to men are fond of the masculine sex. You can't tame even a chicken unless you have a liking for chickens, yet many bachelorettes who might be willing to love an individual man, dislike and distrust the sex as a whole.

But that isn't all. A man doesn't love with his head; it's when he loses his head that he proposes. Love seems to be an emotional disease, which attacks the woman first, and is by her given to the man. Unfortunately, some women are not infection carriers. They may have no antagonism toward men, but they are not emotional, and so cannot

convey the love fever to their men friends. Making love to a mechanical, matter-of-fact girl who exhibits not an atom of sentiment is about as attractive to a man as the thought of hugging a dressmaker's dummy, but the girl who arouses his emotions will get him for a husband, though she has neither face, figure, taste nor talent.

Can this knack of appealing to a man's emotions be acquired? Probably not—it seems to be instinctive with the women who have it. Still, there should be men who can appreciate every type of woman, and it is possible that the "old maid" bachelorette has not yet found her affinity. When she does, she will attract him as irresistibly as the magnet does iron filings. Meanwhile she can only wait and wish—wish hard. One doesn't get things by being lukewarm. Does anyone imagine that any of our great self-made millionaires was lukewarm about wanting money? If the bachelorettes all set about chasing the unmarried men with the same grim determination with which the average millionaire goes after a dollar, Cupid would hang out a sign reading: "Assistant Wanted."

But, as already stated, some bachelorettes prefer a single life, and others are waiting until a better type of man is invented—one that is more reliable and more easily managed. Perhaps no bachelorette is entirely contented, but neither are the majority of married women. A single woman must be her own meal ticket, but it is easier to work at a job than to "work" a stingy husband, and waiting *for* a husband is no harder than waiting *on* one. So the bachelorette feels that, while she loses the joys of wedded life, she also escapes its troubles.

But there is one bitter drop in the bachelorette's cup—no matter whether she is of the willing or unwilling type. She can do without a husband; she can bear with fortitude cares and worries that fall to the lot of the single woman; but it galls her to have people think she couldn't capture a man. And that is why some willing bachelorettes surrender and marry—just to prove that they can.

FRENZY

By Ruth Comfort Mitchell

WHEN November seasons the air with wine,
Gray day or golden, rain or shine,
The touch that makes the whole world kin
Is the alchemist in the football din.
There's magic first in the pushing crowd—
Jam in, cram in, you're not proud;
You hail your friends, you nod, you beam,
Then up on your toes to greet the team!
(What's the use of buying a seat?
All you need is room for your feet!)
Monday brings the same old grind—
Lock the desk and never you mind
The loan you need and the mortgage due,
The rent, the account you overdrew,
The deal you made and the girl you kissed—
Today they simply don't exist!
Down there on the field is the world for you,
The team, the team, good men and true!
You rise and fall with the battle's course,
You shout till you're breathless, red and hoarse;
In the mad, glad sight of the back's advance
You leap, you chortle, you gasp, you dance,
You yell, for the football speech is blunt:
"You there in the mackintosh, *down in front!*"
Where is that thing you hold most dear—
That mud-smeared, blood-stained leathern sphere?
A pounding heart and a prickling spine—
Hurrah! Hooray! It's over the line!
Bedlam—Babel—chaos—then
Your hair is turning white again.
Sickening silence—you'd sell your soul
To see that ball sail over the goal!
Eternity—then the heavenly din!
Your voice is gone, but you weep, you grin,
Hug the stranger and love your foes,
Forgive your debtors, forget your woes,
Ask the girl for her answer then,
Strike the boss for the raise again.
The sun's come out and it's raining flowers,
It's hailing nuggets—the world is ours;
The earth's ablaze and the sky's aflame,
Life is good, for *we've won the game!*

FOR THREE CAMELS

By Achmed Abdullah

IBRAHIM turned to the American. "Soon you will return to your own country. So listen to the moral tale I am about to tell, that you may take back to your own people one lesson, one small lesson which will teach you how to use the manly virtues of honor, self-restraint and piety—virtues in which you unbelievers are sadly deficient. A cigarette, Effendi. Ah, thanks. And now listen to what happened in Ouadi-Halfa between Ayesha Zemzem, the Sheik Seif-ed-din and Hasaballah Abdelkader.

"The Sheik was a most venerable man, deeply versed in the winding paths of sectarian theology and of a transcendent wisdom which his many disciples declared to be greater than that of all the other sheiks—greater even than the wisdom of the supereminent Mohammad ibn Idreesesh-Shafeiy'ee, of whom even you *feringhees* must have heard.

"But the Sheik's beard was scanty and of a mottled color. He was not overclean in spite of the fact that as a most holy man—aye, a Sheik el Tarika—he was supposed to be most rigorous in his daily ablutions. He had grown fat and bulky with years of good living. Tell me, Effendi, should not a holy man live well so that he may reach a ripe age and so that many growing generations may drink the clear drops of honeyed piety which fall from his lips? Besides, to compensate for the many piasters he spent on himself, he tightened the strings of his waistband when it came to paying the wants of his many-headed household, saying that it was his duty as a Moslem to train his sons and the mothers of his sons in the shining virtue of abstemiousness, and asking them to repeat daily

the words in the book of the Koran: 'Over-indulgence is a most vile abomination in the eyes of Allah.'

"His first two Muslimas had grown gray, and his old heart yearning for the untaught shyness of youth, he had taken as third wife Ayesha Zemzem, the daughter of the morning. My dear sir, do not ask me to describe her many charms. My chaste vocabulary could never do her justice. Besides, do you not know that our women go decently veiled before strangers? Thus who am I to know what I am not permitted to see? Suffice it to say that she was a precious casket filled with the arts of coquetry, that she was tall and slender as the free cypress, that her forehead was as the moon on the seventh day and her black eyes taverns of sweetest wine.

"But the heart of woman acknowledges no law and respects no master except the one she appoints herself, and so it was that Ayesha had no love for the Sheik in spite of his white sanctity and though he knew the Koran and all the commentaries by heart. And then one day she saw Hasaballah Abdelkader—and her veil dropping by chance, he saw her.

"Hasaballah had but lately returned from the famed city of Stamboul, that asylum of learning and splendor. He had come back dressed in robes of state, and when he donned his peach-colored coat embroidered with cunning Persian designs in silver and blue, the men in the bazaar looked up and exclaimed: 'Look at him who with his splendor shames the light of the midday sun!' He was indeed a Stambouli, a true Osmanli for all his Bedaw blood, and the soft fall of his large Turkish trousers which met at the

ankle, the majestic lines of his silken *burnous*, the bold cut of his famed peach-colored coat were the despair of all the leading tailors in Ouadi-Halfa and the envy of all the young bloods. His speech was a string of pearls on a thread of gold. He walked lithely with a jaunty step, and swaying gently from side to side. He was a fresh sprung hyacinth and the master of many hearts.

"I said that Ayesha saw him and that her veil chanced to slip, and you, Effendi, you know the heart of woman—and of man. You will not be shocked when I tell you that they drew the sword of Love and threw away the scabbard of Precaution, and that the following night you could have seen Hasaballah leaning against the wall in the shadow of the screened balcony which protruded from the Sheik's harem—and there he warbled a little love ditty which I had taught him.

"Eh? How? Why did I—" Ibrahim laughed. "I am Hasaballah's friend and in his confidence, and he had shown me the little song which he had composed and which he was going to sing to her. It was really too extravagant—he insisted on addressing Ayesha as 'blood of my liver.' No, no, Effendi. The time to woo a woman is when you first see her, and the way to woo her is the old-fashioned way. Flatteries never grow old, and I always use the time-honored similes. I tell her that she is as beautiful as the pale moon on the fourteenth day, that her walk is the walk of the king goose, that the corners of her mouth touch her pink ears, that she has the waist of a lion and that her voice is sweeter than the song of the kokila bird.

"But permit me to continue my tale.

"That night Hasaballah and Ayesha knocked at my gate, and touching my knee, asked me for hospitality and protection, which I granted them, having always been known as the friend of the persecuted. And early the following morning the Sheik came to my house and I received him as an honored guest.

"After partaking of coffee and a pipe, he said: 'Ibrahim, last night when I went to the women's quarter to join my female household in their midnight

prayers, the weeping slaves told me that Ayesha had run away. Great was my grief and fervent my prayers, and when sleep at last closed my swollen eyelids I saw in my dreams the angels Gabriel and Michael descend from Heaven. They took me on shining wings into the seventh hall of Paradise, and there I saw the Messenger Mohammed, on whom be praises, sitting on a throne of emeralds and pearls and judging men and jinn. And Mohammed, peace on him, said to me: "Go thou in the morning to the house of my beloved and obedient servant Ibrahim Fadlallah, where thou shalt find Ayesha and with her a certain good-for-nothing young scoundrel whom thou shouldst carry before the Cadi and have punished with many painful lashes." Thus, O Ibrahim, obeying the commands of the blessed Prophet, on whom peace, I ask you to give up to me Ayesha and Hasaballah, that I may kill the woman and have the man beaten according to the merciful law of the Koran.'

"And I replied: 'Oh, most pious of pilgrims, your tale is strange indeed, though amply corroborated by what I am about to relate. For last night, after the fugitives had asked me for protection, I also prayed fervently to Allah—indeed, He has no equals—and in my dreams the angels Gabriel and Michael took me on widespread wings into the seventh hall of Paradise, even into the presence of the Messenger Mohammed, on whom be benedictions. And the Prophet, deepest peace on him, said to me: "Ibrahim, when the learned and pious Sheik Seif-ed-din visits you in the morning, tell him that I have reconsidered my decision; that he should leave Hasaballah and Ayesha undisturbed and that he should accept two camels in payment of her.'"

"The Sheik pondered a while and replied: 'Verily it says in the most holy book of the Koran that Allah loveth those who observe justice, and that the wicked who turn their backs on the decisions of the Prophet, on whom peace, are infidels who shall hereafter be boiled in large cauldrons of very hot oil. Now tell me, Ibrahim, are you sure that last night the Prophet, peace on him, didn't

say that I should accept four camels, and not two, in payment of the bitter loss inflicted on my honor and dignity? Indeed, for four camels Hasaballah may keep the woman, provided the animals be swift-footed and of a fair pedigree.'

"Thus, O my eyes, I thought that bargaining is the habit of Jews and Armenians, and I sent word to Hasaballah to send three camels to the Sheik. And everybody was happy, everybody's honor was satisfied and there was but little scandal and no foul-mouthed gossip to hurt the woman's reputation.

"I have told you, Effendi, how we Moslems, being the wisest of mankind, settle affairs of honor and love. Tell me, do you not think that our way is better than your crude Christian method of airing such matters in a public court of law and of announcing to a jeering world

the little details of harem life and love misplaced?"

The American replied:

"No, I think yours a disgraceful way of bargaining for a few camels where the shame of a misled woman and the honor of an outraged husband are in the balance. In my country, as you say, the whole affair would have been aired in court and considered from every possible point of view, thus giving the defendant, the plaintiff and the co-respondent equally fair chances. The judge finally, according to our strict though humane law, would have pronounced a divorce decree in favor of the Sheik and would have sentenced Hasaballah to pay to the Sheik a heavy fine, a fine of many thousands of dollars."

And Ibrahim said languidly:

"But, Effendi full of wisdom, you have no camels in your country."



A PICTURE

By Lizette Woodworth Reese

BEAUTY, what have you here?

A spare old street,
Rich with the afternoon.
A hawker with his tune—
A brawling music blown before—
And cart, and stamp of horse's feet,
Sells April wares from door to door.
A woman, sad of eyes,
A tulip buys,
And bears its scarlet in;
One, older and much bent,
Haggles o'er pot of daffodil,
And then, her few pence spent,
Her yellow handful holds aloft
To neighbors shrill.
There is a bough rocks soft,
A vague of green above a battered wall—
The old, old thing,
Spring, spring—
The whole of life in small,
And God behind it all.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF MADAME LÉANDRE

By Helen Woljeska

LOVE is like paradise—with the angel of fiery sword always in evidence.
If you have brains you can never be completely unhappy—nor completely happy.

There is no rival more dangerous to your lover than the dream man you imagined him to be.

A man and a woman cannot be friends, unless they are more than friends.

A woman won't thank you if your respect for her is so deep that her charm cannot occasionally make you forget it.



THE LAND OF YESTERDAY

By Thomas Walsh

THE Land of Yesterday I seek
Adown the trails of spring and song;
The vales of prayer I dip among—
I brave the desert, scale the peak.
But nevermore! No airs bespeak
The shore where Youth's fond roses throng
The Land of Yesterday!
"Nay, pilot, hold! What headland bleak
Is this? The chart—the course is wrong!"
"Nay, 'tis the shore for which you long"—
The pilot turned; 'twas Love's wan cheek—
"The Land of Yesterday."



THERE are men so hardened that they can read their youthful love letters without blushing.

LIONS

By Ethel Watts Mumford

VALÉRIE LEONIE RAMONDA DE MARHARVITA-CASTEL! How the name awakens memories of her as she was at two and twenty—at the time she dropped the colorful splendor of her ancient titles and became plain Madame Montajon—but that is the matter of this story. She was a wonderfully beautiful, dainty creature, Spanish in appearance, for, though French, her ancestors had persistently crossed the Pyrenees when upon the bridal quest, a habit formed early in the fifteenth century, when Adalbert Castel, called "The Foolhardy," was sent to Spain upon a secret mission, and returned with Ramonda, daughter of Zalluca of Valencia. Valérie, to my sorrow, inherited the qualities of bravery and independence, not to say impudence and imprudence, that distinguished the famous Adalbert, but, alas, neglected to acquire his proverbially lucky star. Our affection dates from childhood, and, even in our infant years, I knew better than to waste time in argument. It was simpler to rush headlong into whatever escapade she was bent upon, and later invent devious ways of avoiding consequences.

The convent that sheltered us both was far from being a placid abode of repose under our regime, and if the teaching nuns embarked upon their careers in hopes of a peaceful crossing to the better shore, they must have been woefully disappointed.

We graduated, Valérie by a microscopic margin, and I with every palm and medal that could be bestowed. But in spite of disparity of tastes, our friendship continued as warm and buoyant as ever. Valérie was an orphan and

wealthy in her own right, and for propriety's sake lived with her mother's cousin, the Marquise Perigorde-Bonclier de Bezanson, whose one desire was to marry Valérie to Raimond, her only son. This would consolidate the divided fortunes of the family and unite the precious azure streams of their venerated blood. But Valérie refused to be impressed by the tepid charms of her young relative, and failed to be amused by the stiff and noble circle of her aunt's St. Germain friends. In my own more Bohemian set she found relief and congenial companionship.

My father, a surgeon and a man of note, made me sole arbiter of his *salon*. Here the world of science and of art gathered, quarreled, played, made friends and fought again. Here inventions, discoveries, operas, palaces, paintings, statues, countries and colonies were planned and discussed. Though we are of the "*vieille noblesse*," rank alone was no "open sesame" to our doors. Here Valérie found unrestrained outlet for her iconoclastic energies, and here, alas, she met Montajon.

It happened on one of our unconventional Thursday evenings at home. I remember even the *chaud-froids* we had for supper, and the extraordinary punch an American admiral, a graduate-patient of my father's, brewed for us. I recall the color of the gown I wore—an old coral shade—and the new cap that Zélie, the maid, lost on the staircase. I never asked how, but Count Zenouski's manservant, with whom she afterward eloped, was in attendance on his master, who was in attendance upon—but never mind. In short, that evening is lined in every detail on the wax of my mind.

Valérie arrived about ten.

"Oof!" she cried, as she hugged me impulsively. "She crumples me, my aunt! I feel like a rag in a second-hand shop. Come, put me into conceit with myself. I need to be admired. Tell me that I am delicious to look at—quick! I am beginning to feel conscience-stricken for running away from Tante."

"Your cranial structure, you primitive female," I rejoined, "is exceptionally harmonious in design; also the pigments of your dermal covering are singularly pleasing; moreover, your anatomical diagram would give pleasure to anyone at all interested in the human form."

We often played a foolish game. I was "*La Pedante*"—the Pedantic Lady; she "*La Fainéante*"—the "Do Nothing." It was my role to turn inconsequent nonsense into scientific phrase, while she treated the most serious subjects with the most flippant and newest slang.

"Thank you," she chuckled; "and now present me to the most impressionable person present."

I suggested the American admiral; but no—he was probably happily married—most nice American men were; she wanted fair game, and presently decided for herself.

"Look over there, that dark big one. His eyes are odd; also he has a—well, give me that one."

I didn't know "that one," as it happened. Le Jeune, the tenor, had brought him, and, after his presentation to my father, he had found a corner from which he watched the others with a sullen stare.

"But," I exclaimed, "he's the most unattractive man in the whole room. Why, he's got all the hallmarks of criminal tendency. His head is asymmetrical; can't you see for yourself that the left eye cavity is higher and deeper than the right? His ears have no lobes to speak of; the jawbones protrude, the frontal bone recedes." I was speaking the language of Lombroso in sober earnest, but Valérie took it as part of our "pretend."

"Dear me! What luck!" she exclaimed. "Now I know what's so fas-

cinating about him. Never could I have tagged and named these delightful irregularities all by myself. A thousand times thanks, my beloved analyst. I go to beard the primitive and criminal man in his den."

Which she did forthwith, never waiting for an introduction. I imagine she opened the conversation with a *résumé* of my opinion of his physical peculiarities, for he cast more than one black look in my direction, to her evident delight.

The part of my mind that is purely feminine was warned even then, and my natural distrust of the man was verified by his eccentricities of construction. But the distrust came from a sense other than sight. I felt calamity in his presence. All the evening I tried to break up the *tête-à-tête* in the corner, and failed. At last the party disintegrated, and I overheard Valérie proposing that Montajon accompany her to her home, a proceeding that would have caused no end of unfavorable comment.

I drew my father aside, explained the situation, and he at once offered her his personal escort, while I came forward with an alternative invitation to share my room for the night, and send a maid in the morning for a suitable change of garments. Valérie made a face at me, but knowing that the Marquise was undoubtedly anxiously awaiting her, she refused my hospitality and accepted my father's offer. She wrapped her sable coat about her as we four stood by the door, and I saw from the tail of my eye a pendant fall from Valérie's neck.

Thinking himself unobserved, Montajon picked it up and slipped it into his pocket. Their eyes met, and I understood—that the jewel, a priceless heirloom, would be promptly returned; it would afford instant entree to the salon of Madame la Marquise.

The pendant, attributed to Cellini, was a shield-shaped piece of sixteenth century enamel—the coat of arms of Castel. The supports, two rampant lions, were beautifully modeled, as was the crest, a lion's head and paw emerging from a crown. How dared Valérie trust such a treasure to an utter stranger? I

was angry and ill at ease, and as soon as possible I dismissed the whole disagreeable evening from my mind.

The ensuing weeks were crowded ones, and I had all but forgotten the incident when one day Madame la Marquise de Bonclier de Bezanson was announced. My heart misgave me. I knew with what ardent disapproval she regarded both my father and myself, not to mention the interesting members of our *entourage*. That she should deign to present herself in our unfashionable quarter, even at our unhallowed door, argued something little short of coercion.

I quailed when her card was presented, and recalled with painful vividness my impressions of the lady—a tall, gaunt, ill dressed scarecrow of a woman, seeming by her very disregard of appearances to accentuate her obvious belief that she was above all censure. Her face, a sort of aristocratic Stonehenge of features, filled one with awe and not a little trepidation.

When I entered the *salon*, I found my father standing before her, very much in the attitude of a reprovéd schoolboy. Madame la Marquise was demanding, in harsh and angry accents, an explanation of Montajon, his family, his doings, his prospects, and morals. It was a bolt from the blue. We knew nothing whatever of the man, and told her so. Whereupon she delivered a lecture on our too easy hospitality, accused us of endeavoring to spoil her plans for her son's future and the welfare of Valérie, pointed out that in *her* set the intrusion of "impossibles" was itself impossible, and demanded to know to what riffraff we owed Montajon's presence in our domain. We blushing acknowledged Le Jeune's introduction, and received a tirade on the morals, manners and social status of all the leading lights of the operatic world. Then she rose, withered us in the lighting of her glance and left us to our miserable musing.

While I was indignant at the Marquise's attitude toward my really blameless self, I was filled with consternation for Valérie. How far had this miserable flirtation gone? Was it possible that she would marry this unknown creature

—certainly as far removed from her world as if he had been spawned on the planet Mars!

It was *quite* possible. I learned it later. While the terrified and indignant aunt "looked up Montajon's references," as Valérie put it, both my father and I diligently "moled" for information. We even employed a detective, and the reports we received were worse than our wildest fears. There was no room for doubt—the man was an abject fortune hunter, a slum-born protégé of the Goddess Fortune. His past bristled with unspeakable caddishness, utter callousness and even with cruelty. When the whole ugly truth was authenticated, verified, sealed and witnessed, I sent for Valérie.

She came, her straight little teeth meeting firmly together, intent on battle. Evidently the opposition of her family had bred stubbornness. Nevertheless, I detected indecision, even fear, in her eyes. I set about my task with judicial impartiality. I proved the case against Montajon from A to Z. I kept on as a surgeon works, thoroughly probing, blinding myself to the pain inflicted for the sake of the cure. Valérie grew pale and paler, but she never flinched. Her great eyes seemed to burn in her white face and her mouth set hard, while lines of suffering etched themselves from nostril to lip. She asked many questions, made me go over the evidence again and again. I congratulated myself upon its completeness.

There was a long silence. Then she inquired in a level, colorless voice, if this evidence had been set before her aunt. I replied in the negative. No one except my father, our two selves and those employed in seeking information knew of the existence of the report. Valérie rose, with the precision and slowness of an automaton.

"Then I must ask you to destroy it—now, at once, and never again to mention anything it proves."

"But why?" I gasped. "It isn't possible that after this—"

She stopped me with a look. "I am already married," she said, and, turning, left the room and the house, still with the

stiff, mechanical movements of a sleep walker.

I stood blankly looking at the paper-littered table. Slowly it dawned upon me that the impossible was fact. Of all women in the whole world of my acquaintance, Valérie was the only one so situated as to make a secret marriage possible. She was an only child, an orphan. When she had come of legal age, all her property had become hers without any restraint whatsoever. There was not even a trustee to be considered. Nothing easier than to procure the offices of a magistrate on one of her distant provincial estates to attend to the legal formalities of a civic union. I seemed for a moment transported into Montajon's brain. I understood every treacherous move, every insinuating effort of his scheming villainy. I saw the whole plan—a later public marriage with the church's sanction. The few people who must know the facts would be only too anxious to say nothing and lend the semblance of rejoicing to the sorrowful marriage feast. The gaping world would see this startling *mésalliance* apparently sanctioned by friends too blind to be considered such. A conspiracy of silence would screen Montajon—and Valérie, my dainty, fairylike, gleeful Valérie, was tied for life to that hound! For I knew that, having taken the step, she would abide by whatever it brought her. Not for nothing was the motto of the lion-borne escutcheon, "*Je suis loyal*." She would be gallantly loyal to the end, whatever that might be.

As I had foreseen, on that day of evil news, when I stood there alone above the ashes of the burned evidence, the farce was carried out; Valérie's church wedding took place quietly. The event was a nine days' wonder and then everyone forgot.

Madame Montajon began her married life with every appearance of happiness. She took a charming little *hôtel* on the Champs Elysées, furnishing it delightfully. From her chateaux and from the gloom of Parisian storage, the furniture, tapestries and plate of her ancestors came to adorn her home. It was a museum of delightful elegance. Mar-

vels of art of every kind filled the rooms, but the dining room in particular fascinated me. Laughingly I called it "the Zoo." The paneling was of oak, taken bodily from her chateau at Candebec. On each panel a coat of arms was emblazoned with the name of the lady who had brought it to the house of Castel. There were boars' heads, demi-lions, couchant leverets, dragons in sections, all sorts of heraldic beasts, with, of course, the lion rampant as supreme *motif*. The table, a huge oblong affair, had square corners forming the point of high relief shields, setting forth the full arms of Castel. Overhead a heavy wrought steel chandelier with pans for wax lights, dating back to the time of good Adalbert himself, featured the rampant lions again. The silver that adorned the massive serving tables was emblazoned, as were the chairs. The room fairly crawled with the creatures of heraldic dreams.

Montajon was never present when I came. He felt my antagonism, and preferred not to see me—an arrangement I found most agreeable. But I kept track of him by means of the detective agency—I feared the relapse I felt would come. At first he appeared contented with his new toy, the luxury with which he was surrounded and the freedom and power ready cash afforded him. But little by little, as I had foreseen, his interest waned, and he turned to the haunts of his early life. The slums claimed him; the filth of the street attracted him as the perfection of beauty could not. There were stories of brutality, stories that made one's blood run cold.

It was not long before I was certain that his ugly propensities were not kept for the underworld alone. I saw evidences of violence, but never did Valérie by word or sign give me excuse for comment of any sort. To such of her friends as were interested in her affairs she presented a front of dignified reserve, that seemed to indicate the happiness of a young wife immersed in the interests of her own hearth. Never, even to me, who she must have divined knew the truth, did she turn for sympathy.

The reports grew worse and worse. Montajon was drinking hard, and as was inevitable, given his temperament, became when drunk a veritable demon.

A shocking episode was reported to me about this time, one in which Montajon's violence had been almost murderous. After drinking absinthe for several days in quantities that would have incapacitated any man without the physique of a giant, he suddenly ran amuck in the little café he then frequented, and was with difficulty restrained from killing the woman in the cashier's box, whom he attacked because of a vague resemblance to his wife. The affair was hushed up. With lavish use of money, Montajon bought off the girl and the proprietor of the café. No case was brought against him.

I felt that I must speak to Valérie; I must put her on her guard, advise her to keep some devoted servitor forever within call. But her impenetrable reserve whenever her husband's name was mentioned held me silent. Things had reached this pass when one day she came to me, smiling as usual, with a pathetic attempt at her old slangy, buoyant manner.

"My dear Blue Stocking," she jeered, "I'm going to give you a present. It is a sort of medal awarded for friendship. In short, you might as well send off your cltrap dining room paneling, because I am going to give you 'the Zoo.'"

I looked at her amazed. "You please yourself to joke, Madame Do Nothing! How could I part you from your cherished menagerie? I do not know how one feeds your animals, and heaven is witness, I have a few of my own spouting worthy copybook texts at me. You will please to stable your beasts yourself."

Valérie shrugged. "Well, then, the poor dears will be shut away in the storehouse again, and I'd rather run over and poke them up occasionally here with you. You are very unkind. I will report you to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty; besides, you need them, and I know they like you, and you can't refuse to let them in! They're at the door now."

A little note of appeal that crept, un-

known to herself, into Valérie's voice, made me give welcome to the whole lot. They came, ramping and couching along our walls, writhing overhead in the four massive lightbearers of Adalbert the Bold, glowering from the banquet table, scowling from the chair backs, fraternizing with the emblems of our house that met them on equal grounds of ferocity. Valérie's dining room became a white and gold creation that irked the eye. Simultaneously the ancient plate disappeared from view, and in its place platters and tea sets shone with resplendent newness, innocent of even an initial. Throughout the house the same elimination had taken place. Tapestries and objects of art there were, but not one bore the identifying mark of Castel. I said nothing, but I thought volumes. Evidently the gutter-born Montajon had banned these signs of former greatness, jealous of their too obvious meaning.

It was perhaps a month after this wholesale eviction when Valérie actually mentioned her husband. She came to me, begging for an afternoon just "to play," which was quite out of the question, for I was head over heels in work; but I stole an hour, and we took it into the garden together.

We have a quaint little *jardin perdu*—one of the hidden joys one finds in old Paris. The conservatory opens into it, and one finds oneself in a quaint enclosure, so surrounded by the gray and lofty walls of adjoining houses as to seem the bottom of a well turned into a garden. Here ivy thrives and blue-eyed myrtle, pallid spider lilies and strange groups of spotted mushrooms. Marvelous mosses star the rusty marble benches, and a tiny fountain babbles to itself softly in a bronze basin of twisted lotus leaves from far-away Japan. It is an ideal place for self-communing or for intimate confidences. But the lure of its remote quiet did not seem to make Valérie find her task easy, for that she had set herself a task in this interview I sensed at once. I knew it concerned Montajon, and I was determined to give her warning when she gave me the slightest opening. We talked of everything

in the world except what was uppermost in our minds, and it was not until she rose to go that she mastered her embarrassment.

"Do you keep someone always within call?" she asked. "Haven't you a helper in the laboratory?"

The question shocked me. In another form, it was what I had been longing to say to her.

"Because," she continued, moistening her dry lips and avoiding my eyes, "you shouldn't be alone. My—my husband imagines that you— He has sometimes threatened to come and see you, and—I can't explain—I—"

This gave me my longed-for opportunity.

"Valérie," I cried, "for God's sake, leave this man! I know all, all about him. I know the hell you live in. Take the matter into your own hands!"

She shook her head. She was not thinking of herself, but of me. "Perhaps I worry needlessly," she said, ignoring my outburst, "but—oh, my dear!" she cried, and kissed me suddenly, vehemently, with a passion of terror and affection. She recovered herself and turned away shamefacedly. "I—I must go; it's later than I thought."

I strove to detain her, but she hurried to her carriage, leaving me puzzled as to what Montajon believed me responsible for. Possibly he had discovered that he was shadowed and his doings reported. If so, I had, indeed, better think of protection. Jean Poit, father's assistant, worked with us both, and was rarely out of earshot; consequently I was more alarmed for Valérie than for myself.

I returned to my tasks, but was hopelessly absent-minded; and realizing that faulty work is worse than none at all, I gave it up. Nothing diverted my obsessed mind. I took Mathilde and went for a walk. When I returned it was quite dark. I let myself in with a latchkey, handed my wraps to the maid, who went upstairs, and stepped into the dimly lighted *salon*.

For a moment I stood pensively patting my wind-blown hair, when a slight noise attracted my attention, and, looking up, I saw before me—Montajon.

Somehow I had expected his presence there. I was not startled, only calmly determined to force him to some action that would permit me to take legal steps against him—to close the doors of a prison or a madhouse between Valérie and him.

He came toward me, with slow, serpentine movements. I backed away till I stood between the tapestry curtains that screened the *salon* from the dining room. Two small candle lamps on the serving table gave but a feeble light, but it seemed focused on the white face before me like a spotlight in a melodrama.

When he spoke his voice was low and husky.

"It's you—you who set them on me—I know."

"I was right," I thought; "he has discovered I am having him shadowed."

"Well," I said aloud, "and what then?"

"Of course I can't kill her," he went on, "while they are there, so you must call them off."

Again he drew so close that I loosed my hold on the draperies and retreated to the dining room table. He followed me, his eyes riveted to mine.

"I got rid of them all. I made her send every one of them out of the house. Then I went to her, knowing she was alone—"

My blood chilled as I listened. He paused and seemed lost in thought. Then:

"But I'd forgotten she had on that pendant. Just as my hands were at her throat, I saw them—the lions—the lions!"

I had no time to think. He came at me, his hands upraised and clenched.

"I saw them! I saw them, I tell you! She stood perfectly still, looking into my eyes. I couldn't frighten her. Of course she wasn't afraid—she knew they were there. Each had a paw on her shoulder—and their claws met over her head. I ran—oh, yes, I'm not ashamed to own it. Now I've come to you. I've always felt that you—you set them on me! Call them away—do you hear me? Call them off, or I'll kill you!"

He glared at me with indescribable

hatred. I tried to cry out, and could not. I stood as if hypnotized.

Suddenly his eyes shifted; his gaze ran along the emblazoned walls. He saw the escutcheons to right and left, before and behind him. I will never forget his face, its insane malignity changed to one of abject terror, of hunted, trapped helplessness. I could see the muscles at his throat distend and harden; huge veins that throbbed visibly appeared on his temples. The sweat of fear gathered at the roots of his hair and rolled down his waxen cheeks. His eyes drew upward as if compelled, and fixed themselves in lidless agony upon the metal lions of the chandelier. A hoarse and inhuman clamor burst from his lips. He seized the pendant mass, tearing at it with clawlike fingers. There was a ripping, grinding sound—the great can-

delabra hurtled down, missed me by the fraction of an inch and crashed to the floor. The lights on the serving table rocked and fell, burned for an instant against the polished oak and were extinguished.

Jean and Mathilde, rushing in, found me lying unconscious across the table, while under the wreck of steel lay Montajon—dead.

There is not much more to relate. Cerebral hemorrhage was the verdict at the inquest—but I saw his torn throat. The metal spikes, they said, had made those gashes; but I never see my dear Valérie without imagining in dim outline the huge protecting presences of the lions—a paw on either shoulder, and claws meeting above the courageous head of the last of the house of Castel.



THE FACE OF LOVE

By Mary Grosvenor

WHEN sunset fire was darkening on the sea
 And eastern silver showed the rising moon,
 In some dim pathway o'er a lonely dune
 I made my way alone and dreamily.
 For gray the Past behind my impatient feet
 And gold and red the Future beckoned me;
 So hastening forward toward that vast To Be
 I saw a figure terrible and sweet.

Love Janus-faced at parting of the ways:
 An angel's face with golden head upraised
 Was his, but looking still in that dim light,
 I saw a fiend's face mock the vision bright.
 Angel or devil, who can know Love's face,
 Or which face he may show to mortal sight?



PRISONER—Have I a clear case?
 LAWYER—Yes; I can see right through it—so will the judge.

TORTURE

By Marie Beaumarscheff

GOD of my soul! Can this thing be
That I, a creature made by thee,
Must drain the poison of such woes,
And writhe distorted in their throes,
While through my tortured veins a fire
Burns with a withering desire,
And like a devastating power
Destroys my every living hour?
Is there no lethe for such as I?
Is there no rest from memory
Of all the things that must not be?
Is there no balm of sweet content
For weary hearts that would repent?
How calm the night—the swaying trees
Are sighing to the tender breeze,
And in the garden every flower
Awaits the dew within its bower,
And night birds call and answer low
Because they love each other so;
Aye, and the insects seem to me
To chant and hum in harmony;
While I stand silent and alone,
A discord in God's monotone.
I could have sworn I heard a sound
Of sweetest music all around,
Like phantom music, deadly dear,
Now far away—now very near,
And someone's voice in cadence low
Breathing of love—ah, 'tis not so!
Let me not hear what may not be;
There's torture in this phantasy!
Ah, still my heart that I may go
Far from these things that wound me so!
God of my soul! It must not be
That I love those who love not me.



MONEY talks. But it hasn't much of an audience when it simply talks common cents.

CHICAGO, A CITY WITH INSTINCTS

By Constance Skinner

WHAT gives a city its personality? How does it acquire a stature, complexion, figure, a fashion of movement, gesture, a tone of voice and, above all, a look in the eyes that makes you, the stranger, uncover your heart and reach your hand to that city's grip or else take a tighter hold on your pocketbook?

It is said that the city shapes the lives of men and women, rules and ruins, discards and makes great according to its whim; and it is said also—by those who stand and by those who fall, alike—that no one can ever know the why of a city's whim, why it shapes some to success and others to dishonor. Men and women make the city and the city mars men and women—so runs the modern adage. The fact is, though, that life shapes the city. Life is the sculptor, not city nor mankind nor womankind. Life shapes a city as easily as it shapes a man. It uses a heavier mallet, a longer chisel, and sends more marble chips flying in the one instance; but the process is the same.

A city, after all, is only life's bigger ideal of a human being, and expresses, therefore, a bigger sense of personality.

You can imagine the sculptor turning from a tableful of sturdy little three-inch manikins made in the Troubetskoy manner—and in the Troubetskoy manner every inch is an inch of power—to the forming of a city, with the rugged glee of a Michael Angelo hacking his mighty "Moses" out of the shapeless white mountain.

The position of the studio has its influence on the sculptor's dream. Chicago was made on a great lake shore; and Chicago has the strain and fret of

men who live by big inland waters with winding unseen far exits to the sea. It is the strain and fret of the red-corpuscled life seeker. There is no question about the color of Chicago's corpuscles. It matches the sunset haze over the river shade for shade.

Vermilion-blooded Chicago! Who has felt the pounding of your great pulse and not loved you? Life shaped you a very living city, Chicago! You are a mighty, newly great personage, with four "V's" rampant on your crest—Vim, Vitality, Vigor and Virility. And so lustily pleased are you with your newly-greatness that it will be many a long day ere your red lip thins to a curled sneer and the trickle of ice water slackens the crimson flow through your veins. Life sculptured you fearlessly and set you on exhibition, regardless of critics from the near Orient who would be sure to scan your huge crude Rodinesque figure with something akin to nervous dislike. Your faults are so obvious. To avoid hurting your feelings, let us twist the phrase into the negative and say, with your own splendid disregard of the English language, that you are possessed of a fine large lack of polish. "No refinement" has been registered against you on the Orient tablets.

With smiling frankness and in your very own speech you have retorted that the mind of your Eastern critic is as broad as the baby ribbon that subways through the flounces of a Broadway broiler. You are both right. You have both proved it.

First impressions have value if they are the intuitive responses of an open mind and not the imported first impressions of a bigot. To judge of Chicago's per-

sonality on first sight, it is better to take the impressions of a stranger from the far West than from the East. Western eyesight is trained on wide horizons. Its science of optics considers defects of the least possible importance. To get the whole view quickly is the main thing.

The Western stranger meeting Miss Chicago on her Lake Shore Drive will uncover his heart and reach her his hand and fear nothing for his pocketbook. He will sense in her something akin to him, and he will trust her. He will look into her eyes and find there kindness, keenness, sincerity, mingled with wariness, hardness and a certain coarseness. He will look at her mouth—frank and full-lipped, ready to smile or drop a pleasant oath of unconsidered meaning, bordered by the lines of a young, daring, vigorous experience—and he will know her for the shrewd woman city who follows her instincts, because she gets more out of life that way and knows far back in her large, round, pugnacious head that she can always trust her brains and her sense of humor to come to her rescue if her instincts plunge her too deeply into too costly experiments. She is a liberal city when led by her instincts, but she knows the emotional value of a hundred cents as well as the financial.

This is one reason why her Eastern critics will never understand her; because she will risk money to follow her instincts—nay, because she *has* instincts to follow. Good instincts they are, too, generally. It is in her methods that she errs most frequently, not in her intents and impulses. But she seems very, very crude to her Eastern critics who lost their instincts about the time when their first generation of money kings, the pioneers, was succeeded by the second generation, the plunderers.

Chicago realizes that to baby ribbon minds she lacks class, but she is not sensitive. As she would say, herself, class is one of the things she "hasn't got around to yet." Culture is another.

Now there is no reason why Chicago should not be cultured—in a degree, at least—for she has several acres of handsome University where they teach everything they can buy a book about. Also

she is environed by women's clubs where they lecture on everything else; and she is bounded on the north by Evanston. Her University is very handsome and widespread. Its buildings are almost, perhaps quite, Elizabethan. It is rumored that its atmosphere sometimes makes professors a little "heady." That may be because its light of learning burns by kerosene. The odor is not unpleasant, but it is there and unmistakable—a peculiar sort of incense, as it were. The old contention that oil and water won't mix has been disproved at the village schoolhouse on the Midway. They will mix if the temperature is low enough. Chicago is not encased in a shell, hard or soft—she has found her attempts at immersion in culture to be shivery experiences. There is too much troubled waters for the oil. Her instincts rebel at the temperature.

Chicago's feeling toward her Punditorium may be best expressed in this happy phrase from B. L. T.'s Cannery: "She regards her university with civic pride." She sees to it that the big motor bus with megaphone attachment rolls strangers and visitors from Manhattan and Petoskey over the college campus to learn the date, price and object of each building—and, having thus discharged her duty, sends her boys to Minnesota, California and Yale. It used to be Columbia and Harvard, till the sons, instead of graduating with their full quota of football marks as did their elder brothers before them, began to arrive home with diplomas for dramatic criticism and a trunk full of the sort of problem plays which Ibsen might have written but never did. (How could he, indeed, without Brander Matthews to instruct him? Is it not to Professor Matthews's discourse upon "A Doll's House" that we owe our first interpretation of Ibsen as the Norwegian Mrs. Pankhurst?)

Chicago knows her duty to the theater—*oh, yes, she does*; witness Evanston and Lake Shore Drive—but she could not yield up *all* her stalwart sons to it. Her instinct and her reason both cried out: "Nay, let us still have breadwinners!"

Chicago, city of instinct, is ever for realities. Shams bother her, or, rather, they do not bother her long. She welcomes every new idea with open mouth, but—to lapse into her own pungent diction—she chews twice before she swallows. There was a time when the word “pork” seemed to sum up the universe for her. She pointed to her stockyards like that ancient Roman matron to her sons, and said, “These are my jewels.” But she has learned that reality is not necessarily always so objective as acres of bristling pork and long lanes of tossing antlered steers. She has progressed in metaphysics to the place where she sees that art is as real as beef. But she has yet to learn that it need not be so obvious. She is at that interesting stage of spiritual and emotional progress when the instinct is right and all for the right thing while the brain is as wrong regarding that thing as it can be; and there is no subject on which self-conscious intellect can get *so* wrong as it can on art. In short, some of the mothers are in a worse plight than their sons were at Columbia; and some of the fathers—aye, and they that be no fathers—have been taken publicly with weird seizures on the topic of art, particularly dramatic art. Because dramatic art makes use of spoken language instead of pigments or notes, all these eager bands of students fondly imagine that it is the simplest and easiest art to comprehend and to master, whereas it is the most difficult.

Totally unaware of the difficulties, as she is, Chicago is undaunted. “Nothing daunted” is her motto. She held to it bravely in the teeth of the gale blown by the advancing skirts of six hundred Evanston women marching down the white shore with “Drama League” emblazoned on their foreheads. Her instincts should have warned Chicago, but they failed her. This was because Chicago has persistently refused to take Evanston seriously. It has regarded Evanston as a sort of intellectual soft drink counter, where the crystal ooze of a long tolerated piety siphonates its moral spray into every beverage; and (far be it from me to seem to pun, but) a

place where one may get an old-fashioned Sunday—with nuts. Evanston is the home of the Northwestern University and a theological bureau besides. Culture and church coalesce here as on the Midway. Although there is less water in the creed, and the lamp of learning burns by an oil that is not standard, still Chicago views Evanston culture with transplanted doubts from the Midway.

Chicago would have enjoyed rolling up her sleeves and “going to it” to get herself cultured. She would have preferred to follow her instincts and to hew out her own educational system by her own broad, blundering, fearless, aggressive, self-correcting methods. But commerce and creed surreptitiously bestowed upon her her colleges while she was too busy curing hams to do more than call a blind “thank you” over her left shoulder.

This explains much that perplexes her in her recent “art movements.”

Her newspapers, which are frank, informal, facetious and kindly in tone, welcomed the Drama League with intent to be funny without intent to wound. This is Chicago’s form of wit, designed for wholesome laughter. There is this to be said for the Chicago dramatic critics: they are still writing for the public and not merely for each other and the managers. They are not popular with the managers on this account. The managers, of course, long ago passed up the public. They build theaters and produce now solely for the moral effect on each other. Chicago *instinctively* dislikes this situation, because she gets all the failures the first year and none of the successes till the second year, which is much too long to wait to pan most of them as they deserve. Therefore Chicago tossed merry quips at the Drama League of America and Evanston, but said: “Show us what you can do, and after we have smiled sufficiently we will back your crusade.”

All the little clubs from Woodlawn to Wilmette bought an entrance push button to the League, and soon Chicago became a great greenhouse for drama culture. And all this happened because of

a few words in behalf of uplift which Tyrone Power so lightly let drop. Yes, after all, it was an actor and a good one who gave Chicago her Drama League! Some day soon Chicago's instinct will awake to the meaning of that fact, and she will make her Drama League change its name or justify it! Like all instinctive natures, Chicago is wrathful and "up and coming" when she reaches so-called "sober" second thought and realizes that her instincts have been betrayed. That is the urge of the West still in her. Who that knows the West has not heard her slogan: "Don't trifle with my instincts!"

The Drama League does not dispose of dramatic art in Chicago. It tries to, but it doesn't. There is also the Chicago Theater Society. Strange to say, the C. T. S. had its inception in the only Chicago circle which is ashamed of its instincts. This circle is known as the Cliff Dwellers. 'Tis an apt title in many ways. They club selectly in cosy, homey rooms just under the eaves of Orchestra Hall Building, under the peaked sheltering highbrow of the Cliff, so to speak, safely removed from the broad boulevard named Michigan, where at all hours of the day and night the young instinctive life of the city pounds primordially. An aggressive (and possibly blackballed) wag once said that "the Cliff Dwellers comprise men who merely write, men who nearly think and men who really paint." It is not a very bright or pungent saying unless you have an intimate and spiteful acquaintance with the Dwellers. It was the writers and the thinkers (as per above statement) who began suddenly at otherwise harmless lunches (not luncheons) to nearly think about the drama, inspired no doubt by Father Power's Evanston Drama League. The painters kept themselves pretty strictly to their palettes. They do really paint, those Chicago painters, many walls of the Art Institute to the contrary notwithstanding. Paul paints, but the Appolli hang; and who gives the increase—and gets it—is one of those secrets which Chicago's kind of instinctive breeding prevents her from disclosing.

The merely writers enlisted the press and the nearly thinkers successfully solicited Lake Shore Drive, and in a week Chicago had a Theater Society to rival her own Opera Society. The plays were chosen by the instinctless Dwellers under the Highbrow assisted by a Broadway firm of managers. Some of the play choosers (not from Broadway) said that one of their objects should be to "get sex out of the American drama." Even the Evanston Leaguers never had so white a thought as this! (If the city of instinct had but known how they plotted to emasculate her pulsing, punching "influence on art"!)

Whatever else prudes lack, 'tis never imagination they're wanting for! To neuter-gender the stage! High dreams—high dreams!

It is said that they almost succeeded. They produced one play which left out no remote detail of the primeval subject, the point being, doubtless, to dispose of the whole sex chimera—to "get it all out of the theater" once and for all in one play. Modest and sensitive critics turned purple on the opening night. 'Tis said the play would have brought a blush to the cheek of Utah. If the instincts of Chicago sometimes lead her rashly—and they do—still it is proved abundantly that for Chicago to forsake her instincts is fatal. When led by reason and ethics and some sudden sprung moral purpose, she works a grievous mirth in gods and men. "He laughs best," etc., the saying goes. Chicago's red corpuscles and her virile instinct will do some things noticeable *in* art when she has finished doing things *to* art. Chicago does not like the theater today. Her instinct is powerful enough to remodel it into a genuinely American theater, if she once becomes gingerized enough on the subject to forget her newly and externally acquired ethics and let her innate feelings rule.

Society still has instincts, in Chicago. It follows them. Nothing but vigorous, unashamed instinct could account for some of the architecture on Millionaire's Lane along the water bank. There are castles that look like a monopolist's panorama from Athens up the Rhine

and return, or a bird's-eye view of Europe. You can tell at once that the owner of any one of these sample palaces could afford all styles and did not care who knew it. Who will write a "Stones of Chicago"? Who stands in the relation of Ruskin to this Venice? Hamlin Garland is the only name that comes to mind. He should know the stones of Chicago by this time, for enough have been thrown at him of late in connection with local theatricals to have made something more than a hero of him if any of them had hit him.

Another point which proves the superiority of instinct even for high society is that Chicago society lives as it pleases and is not afraid to enjoy itself like the *bourgeoisie*. When one of Chicago's best instincts, Jo. Medill Patterson, has a play produced, great, warm, impulsive, instinctive Chicago society puts on everything but the last straw and piles into the boxes and claps like the ushers at a Belasco opening. One reason why Chicago grew so fast is that she never stopped to ask what anybody might be thinking about her. It has always been her splendid, big, keen-eyed instinct not to *care*; and she sits mightily on her lake front because of it.

There is a very simple reason why the stranger reaches hands to Chicago, wherever it be his lot to make her acquaintance—whether in her depots, her ghettos, her offices of a thousand businesses, her theaters, her newspapers or her homes. It is because *instinctively* her hand is out to him even before he lands. Her heart is too big for fear and her instinct is to make welcome. She trusts the future because her past has been a past of victory and her present is one of hope.

The world has watched and criticized her. She has been singled out for special condemnation with Calcutta and Paris, and that city on the Styx which, politely, shall be nameless. She has left all wide for the world folk to see; and all their books and preachments against her but register their littleness against her bigness. She is healing the maimed and the blind of every nation, even her own, and taking her chances greatly. She is not afraid of crime, any more than her outgoing ships are afraid of the dark as they thread and toot and crawl inexorably down her unbeautiful little River of Service out to the lake and on through far exits to open water and hungry ports.

Her instinct is to trust the Great Riverman to look out for the snags; her *work* is to keep moving. So she forges ahead with all bells ringing and a full head of steam and shouts above her din to everyone, from her mayor to the little Syrian immigrant boy who plays barefooted on her uneven pavements:

"I *want* you to make good."

There is no life that has been really touched by the sturdy tendernesses, the beauties and the demands of Chicago which has not been bettered and intelligenced thereby. There is no heart that has known her that will not forever respond to her, forever proudly feel itself a part of her. The eyes that have truly seen her behold a mantle of spiritual beauty wrapping her fleshly frame; they see her both visibly and prophetically as her own rare poet, William Vaughn Moody, saw her when he wrote:

And yonder where, gigantic, willful, young,
Chicago sitteth at her northwest gates,
With restless violent hands and casual tongue
Moulding her mighty fates,
The Lakes shall robe them in ethereal sheen.



WILLIS—Is he strong on family pride?

GILLIS—I should say so. He regards the seven wonders of the world as himself and any six of his ancestors.

STRAY SHOTS

By Harold Susman

"ECONOMY is wealth"—provided you have enough wealth to economize on.

Eve met Adam at the rib encounter.

A dark secret—where the matches are kept.

More honored in the breeches than in the observance—thin calves.

Moccasins were first made on the last of the Mohicans.

There is very little serf bathing in Russia.

It takes an editor to make a long story short.

A popular measure—brim-full.

Nothing recedes like success.

Vanity Fare—flattery.

The fortune hunter is not so much impressed by pretty faces as by handsome figures.



IT taxes the ability of a genius to be veracious and diplomatic at the same time.



SOME women agree with their husbands in name only.

ON THE TOP OF THE WORLD

By Jane W. Guthrie

REGINA TEMPLE was never able to explain to herself the impulse which had urged her to thrust her counsel upon a man with whom she had not a speaking acquaintance, whose face even was known to her merely through the medium of the public prints. The truth of the matter was that Regina had not yet hardened into the molds of propriety approved by society, though she was given opportunity often enough to observe their stiffening qualities. There was a question in her own mind that she ever would slide into them, since she preferred to arrive at conclusions in her own way on all subjects, and met circumstances in the manner that seemed best to her at the time.

That was why she went to a political meeting at Cooper Union one evening in late September to listen to the speech of a candidate for municipal honors, and sat between a Senator of the United States on one side and a typical Bowery ward heeler on the other, and conversed with one and then the other impartially and unreservedly, at intervals of pleasure or dissent from the speech. Regina loved her city. She thrilled always to the swirling currents that it sent about her feet, and she longed to test herself and her strength against them; and what was more, she was feeling then that she might be able, should any wreck drift near her, to plunge into the current and by her own strength of enthusiasm and the valiance of her purpose bring it ashore. Upon those sisters of hers who stood and faced the currents with lack-lustre and uninterested eyes Regina looked with scorn. Cooper Union is apt to suggest these things to one new to its atmosphere.

It was during the heckling of the candidate, later in the evening, that Regina became conscious of the low, tense voice of a man speaking just back of her. There was a vindictive rasp to the utterance which seemed to be the continuation of some previous conversation.

"I heard an old broker giving advice to a young one the other day, and it was good," the voice related. "He said: 'Never take a woman's account. Women are all right as long as they're on the winning side, but just let them lose—'" The voice gave an expressive click. Regina imagined the gesture which accompanied the little noise in the throat.

"Um-m-m," grunted the other man a trifle absently.

"Women are bad losers; the broker was right," the first voice asserted disgustedly; "and they'll always shirk consequences if they can."

Regina's cheeks flamed with indignation. She wanted to turn about and say: "You don't know what you're talking about. I know women—at least, I know one woman not afraid of consequences!" But she restrained herself. Regina was not unsophisticated, if she was young and of an ardent temperament; and she prided herself on her ability to climb, without injury to herself or her garments or propriety, those barbed wire fences which society calls conventionalities and puts up for its protection.

After the meeting was over, however, she turned quickly to look at the two men whose conversation had made her an involuntary eavesdropper. One of them, the shorter man, had his back already to her making his way out of the

hall; but the other, the taller of the two, she knew. There were few indeed who did not, since his private affairs had become public property and his picture had appeared in the newspapers. Nor did Regina blame him now for his cynical remarks, if indeed they had been his, of which she could not be sure; but considering circumstances, she felt that she might reasonably attribute them to him. For this man, Allen Dumont, from being possessed of a goodly fortune, had suddenly, almost in the twinkling of an eye it seemed, become bankrupt—bankrupt, if one might trust rumor, not only in pocket but in domestic affairs as well, since his wife, unable, it was asserted, to stand the strain of a restricted income, had gone back to her father's comfortable home and was seeking a legal separation.

Regina remembered the published accounts of Allen Dumont's financial catastrophe. He had been the victim, it was generally acknowledged, of men shrewder than himself, and whereas they had taken advantage of legal technicalities to save themselves from loss, Dumont had declined to do so. Regina remembered how she had thrilled to the man's courage and pluck, his refusal to free himself in any way from the consequences of his lack of judgment, and his determination to shoulder his own obligations, quixotically withholding from his wealthy relatives any inkling of his financial straits until it was too late for them to intervene in his behalf.

The climax had come upon him without warning, and he had made but one request, which was that the announcement of his failure to meet his obligations should be withheld for a day, since his wife was giving her annual June reception on the following day, and he wished to spare her the knowledge of their tangled monetary affairs until it was over.

Regina's sympathetic eyes dwelt upon his tall figure with the rather slouching shoulders, the dark, brooding face, the somberly set mouth. She thrilled again to the fine chivalry of his conduct, and now—her lip curled—his wife, unable to measure up to his moral standard,

was leaving him to bear his burdens alone. No wonder he was cynical.

The thought of this lived with her all night as a sort of troubled dream, and even after she had wakened in the morning it held her in the withering grasp of a depression which she found hard to shake off. But having errands downtown, she took one of the motor buses that run up and down the Avenue, and perched herself on the front seat in order to let the fresh, crisp autumn air blow from her thought the cobwebs of other people's troubles.

It was a glorious morning, vividly clear, with something of the sparkle of the sea in the atmosphere—one of those wonderful days which dazzle the senses and set the blood dancing through the veins. Regina took a long, clean breath of air to fill her lungs and gazed happily about her at the city she loved in a joyous glitter of prideful pomp. Presently a man dropped rather heavily into the vacant seat beside her, a man with moody eyes and a set mouth. Regina, stealing a sidelong glance at him, almost gasped. Surely this was the man, Allen Dumont, who had sat behind her the night before at Cooper Union, the man whose remarks had roused her not only to indignation but to pity; yet, somehow, he was not so tall as he had seemed nor so broad-shouldered. Perhaps the dim light of the hall had given her a wrong impression of his height; and in this clear light of morning he looked younger. Regina stole another look at him. Yes, this was the same man; she was sure that she could not be mistaken.

Just then the bus stopped jerkily to allow a workman to climb down into a manhole in the street, a dark, grewsome hole, it looked, as Regina, leaning over the side of the bus, could see. The man beside her leaned forward and glanced quickly, impatiently toward the cause of the momentary delay.

But Regina, accustomed to speaking her thoughts when and where they suggested an opportunity, remarked, by way of reflection:

"There's always some way out, isn't there?" She glanced up at the man sitting beside her, the flash of interest in her

eyes bespeaking not only a cosmopolitan spirit but the frank and engaging confidence which merits no rebuff from a stranger.

Yet the man turned to her with knit brows. "What?" he asked almost impatiently, but as if he were really endeavoring in a tense preoccupation to catch the drift of her remark.

"I said there is always some way out. It looks horrible down there, doesn't it?" Regina shuddered quite becomingly. "And when that man comes up from the place, his fellow workmen have to sweep the bugs and the crawling things off of him with brooms—I've seen them do it. But don't you suppose that he remembers, down there in the dark, that even if his light goes out and he has to grope to get about, that there is a way out for him?"

The man turned and looked deliberately at the slender, girlish figure sitting beside him, at the eager, smiling face, the red-brown hair under the smart little turban, where the strands caught a gleam of sunlight and held it until they looked like burnished gold. He looked at the youth in the eyes and the soft curves about the smiling lips. Certainly she was not speaking from experience—rather the lack of it.

"There are some situations from which there is no way out." The tightly set lips relaxed in a grim smile not pleasant to see.

"Don't believe any such nonsense," Regina counseled stoutly. "There is always some way out from the blackest hole, the direst combination of circumstances."

The man almost laughed aloud in ironic unbelief; but he contented himself with a shrug of the shoulders, an exaggeration of his grim smile. He made no effort to reply, and the bus having started again, they had ridden two or three blocks further down, when Regina pushed the bell in front of her, a summons to the driver to stop at the next street crossing; and as she did so, she turned and spoke hurriedly to her companion, quite as if she must deliver an opinion and an explanation to him.

"I heard," she announced, speaking

rapidly and in an undertone, "what you said last night at Cooper Union. I was sitting just in front of you, next to Senator Stonington. You must be in a bad way if you think that all women shirk consequences—take the good and refuse to share the evil." Then Regina somewhat hastily climbed down to the street, and it must be confessed that her cheeks were flaming and her eyes shining in a most becoming way. She stood for a moment on the curb before crossing the street. Suddenly she glanced up quite involuntarily. Her fellow passenger was leaning down over the side of the bus, looking intently at her. Regina remembered that she had heard him murmur an astonished and somewhat irreverent ejaculation as she had hurried away, but she met his eyes levelly; yet could it be that his eyes held an insistent question and a—challenge?

There were moments during the next six weeks when Regina blushed hotly as she recalled the incidents of that ride; she would become desperately self-conscious, which was not at all Regina's way. Then there were other times when she defended herself stoutly. "I'm glad I spoke to him," she would declare. "No man has a right to go about with a face like that. And—I liked him. I liked him even when he was grouchy." But still more did she congratulate herself when she was told that there was no truth whatever in the rumor of disagreement in the Dumont household; that the whole story of domestic tanglement was the creation of scandal lovers—and yet, she was puzzled, too. Why else should he have been airing such a revolutionary opinion of her sex?

It was a day in November, six weeks later, when Regina met the man and had a chance to ask him—a soft autumn day when the tall buildings on the Avenue wrapped themselves in opalescent hazes and bewildering color effects; a day when summer came back through the aisles of autumn and sang to the heart of the world a pagan rapture of eternal beauty, eternal youth, eternal joy. Regina had been out all the afternoon, and was on her way home up the Avenue when lo, the man stood just in front of

her. To her dream-filled eyes he seemed to spring from the sidewalk to confront her, but he had in truth been walking just back of her for half a block.

"I shall not ask if I may walk with you—I am going to do it," he smiled, and Regina confessed even through her surprise and an unusual self-consciousness that his smile was delightful, and that it transformed his whole face—that it, in itself, secured what it asked for.

"You see," he continued—and Regina further confessed that his voice was charming, cultivated and delightfully modulated—"I've spent quite a respectable fortune riding up and down in motor buses looking for a certain young woman, Miss Regina Temple by name, who read destiny for me one morning—how long ago, I can't remember—and who thereby laid great obligations on herself."

"Why—" Regina's cheeks were flaming, though she veiled her eyes with their long, fringing black lashes as she glanced hastily up at the man beside her. "How did you know my name?"

"Asked it—asked it of every way-faring friend and acquaintance, until I found a man—Senator Stonington, who sat beside you at Cooper Union one memorable night. He recognized my very accurate description of a young woman who spoke in parables, and he recalled that you had murmured your name as the daughter of one of his friends."

Regina laughed, and her laugh was delightfully companionable, though she tried her best to fix her mouth formally and incline her eyes to coldness. Allen Dumont was a married man, she reflected, and this was an occasion when she would better observe propriety. She liked him, liked the deferential way that he spoke to her, and all that—but—he was no longer in trouble, to judge by appearances, and his manner was—rather possessive. Not that Regina put this into words, but that instinct held her, the instincts of woman trained, though she denied it, to conventional constraints as well as by the laws of sex. "My obligations—I don't understand—"

"Then I'll tell you. I'm your re-

sponsibility—your obligation." The eyes laughed; the gay banter in the tones was unmistakable, yet under it was an eager earnestness. "You saved my life—of course you did—or my reason, or something—I don't know just what; and I'll leave it to you to find out."

Regina drew back perceptibly; she did not venture to look at the man.

"I suppose," he continued, "that I had been thinking so long on one subject that I couldn't see things straight. I hadn't slept for nights; there were my business affairs, and then—the last straw. I suppose I was speaking of that when you overheard me. I could see nothing but my worries; yet somehow when you spoke to me that morning you broke the thread of my thought as completely as if you had cut it with shears. I got to thinking about you, remembering how you looked"—there was a very warm tone in the voice now, in fact a very personal interpretation of feeling—"of what you had said, and I rode up and down in that blessed bus for three solid hours. Suddenly there popped into my head the name of a man I hadn't thought of for years. I didn't recall at the time that you had spoken of him. It was Senator Stonington, and I decided then and there to go to him and ask his advice in my affairs. I got down off that bus and went straight to him. He showed me how to arrange my investments, and discussed my affairs most helpfully; and the other matter"—a shadow crossed the man's face—"I arranged that myself." There was a stern note in the voice but no vindictiveness. "I think you awakened me from a not very happy dream." He threw back his head and drew a long, breathing sigh of relief.

Then he turned and looked down at Regina. "You said you were not afraid of consequences." The voice teased now; so did the eyes, the smile; and yet—there was that eager earnestness, and that taking for granted that she understood, that she sympathized with him, that she meant to be companionable. But Regina's upward look was troubled. She was not so sure of her ability to keep

her garments or herself from those barbed wire fences that she had essayed to climb over six weeks before.

"I don't believe I understand." She stopped still and looked into the frank, clear brown eyes of the man beside her, at the smile courteously sweet but intimate. The man did not answer; instead he laughed, looked back of him down the Avenue where the sun was sending its last long slants out from the streets to the west and caught sight of a bus traveling their way.

"Will you get up on this bus and talk about it?" he asked. The glow of the afternoon was in his face, but about his lips, in his eyes a spirit seemed to be clinging, a spirit whose language she could understand, a spirit of frank admiration, of unquestioning regard.

Regina hesitated. She caught that spirit to her heart and held it to her. It was hers, that fine regard hers, for one brief moment.

"No, I will not." She spoke with clear decision, drew away formally. Propriety—the propriety at which she had flouted and gibed, stood before her with menacing eyes and stern uplifted hand.

"Oh, come," the voice coaxed. "There waiting for us is that same seat that we had—how long ago?" The sensitive face was all aglow. Regina forgot that it had ever been moody, somberly set.

"Come—come," he urged, as the bus drew up to the curb at his nod. "I'll take you up to the top of the world—the top of the world," he murmured as he gazed at her.

Regina was obdurate. "No." She shook her head. "No." Her voice was cold, even resentful. The bus rumbled onward, leaving them standing there.

The man turned and looked at her—a long, considering look. "Ah," he said slowly, ponderingly, his eyes searching her face, "after all, you *are* afraid of consequences—afraid to talk to a man whose name you do not know—to whom you have not been properly introduced." The sensitive face changed, grew cold; his voice was rasped. "Even after so sweet and brave an ignoring of conventionalities as you made, you have put

on your society mask. You don't know me—you don't know my name. I thought you were different, could judge for yourself, could make up your own mind." He turned away. "I shall not offer you my card—that would be banal." His brow darkened. "I crave your consideration—I took too much for granted. I believed what you said." He moved quickly from her side.

"Wait a moment." Regina spoke hurriedly, as she caught up to his step, "You are not a stranger to me—that is, not quite. I know your name—your face. I knew of your troubles; I thought you were splendid—indeed, I did—the way you took them, and so—" The scarlet swept over her face clear up to the tips of her ears; the troubled, contrite look in the eyes gave them a lovely, tender glow, as if she were really offering him the flowers of her heart—sympathy and feeling.

"You knew my name?" the man asked.

"Yes, Mr. Allen Dumont, I did." Regina put her hand out and rested the tips of her fingers on his coat sleeve. They lay there like the blossoms of forgetfulness that she was offering him for her intentional hurt.

The man stared at her for one long moment, but his eyes did not brighten. "You thought—that I—was Allen Dumont? I remember that we were together that night. Well, I am not. I am only his cousin, Alfred Dumont. I don't deserve your good opinion."

"Oh!" Regina's voice dropped to a note of despair, of desperate humiliation, but she did not lift her hand from that coat sleeve. "I wish," she said in a low, pleading tone, "that you would tell me now how I acquired my obligation."

"There's nothing very much to tell you." The tone was perfunctory. He looked about him. "It's growing dusk. The day is done," he said rather absently.

"No—no." Regina's hand tightened on the sleeve. "Tell me."

"I had been abroad," he explained in a flat, uninterested fashion, "and I had just come home when Allen's

troubles came upon him. I had made some investments with him—considerable ones they were, too—and though he did his best to save them for me—I was going to lose them, I feared, at the time I saw you. I didn't mind that so much—I could work out of that—but—" Here he stopped.

"Go on," commanded Regina.

"A girl who was in France with her mother—I had spent the spring with them—heard about Allen's affairs. Someone wrote to her about them, and conveyed the idea to her somehow that it was I. We look alike, I believe people say, and—the name. She and her mother thought that I had gone to smash. She threw me over without a qualm, apparently—without a chance to defend myself."

Regina's hand slipped down and fell into the hand of the man beside her with a warm clasp. Once more she was standing atop the barbed wire fence, without regard for any rents in the garments of propriety.

"You're all alike," he said somberly. "I thought you different—sweet and frank—a real woman, that morning on the bus; that you were humanly interested in your fellow beings, and were not afraid to be yourself, not afraid of consequences. You're like all the rest." He shook his head. "You take nothing on trust. You have to be convinced."

Still holding the hand in a warm, detaining grasp, Regina turned and looked back of her down the Avenue. The dusk of evening was drawing down—the dusk of an enchanted day. Suddenly the flowers of the city's night burst into bloom, long strings of pinkish, moonlike blossoms—the street lamps. The light of one fell across the face of the girl as she drew her companion to the curb. It threw into outline its delicate purity; it touched to a glow the velvety warmth of her gray eyes, lingered in the tender curves of her sweet young mouth. "Here comes a motor bus," she said softly, "and yes—yes, there is a seat up in front for two."



THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE

By Nancy Byrd Turner

HE laughs the best who laughs the last,
Save when, perchance, his laughter
Comes after someone's pointed joke—
And a little too long after.



TO have a family skeleton may sound very fine—but they are usually mere old dried bones of contention.



HASTE makes waste; and often sitting around a good deal without hastening makes a lot of waist, too.

COWARDS

By Kate Masterson

CORCORAN was giving the supper party. These midnight feasts of his at his gorgeous rooms at the Albany had become the smartest affairs in a tired-out town at the end of the season. Always a pretty woman or two, an editor, a poet, sometimes a priest, a portrait painter or a peer who might be a good sort or an interesting story teller, this popular actor-manager was sure to get a charming crowd together.

Tonight the gusty softness of the late spring came through the open windows to the group about the lace-covered table with its candles flickering behind rose-shaped shades of yellow silk over the glass and crystal and the little silver dishes of bonbons and fruit. There were shallow bowls of primroses giving out a golden glow of color here and there.

Parkers, the tall, correct, impassive butler, had served the coffee. Everyone seemed to be talking at once about a celebrated libel suit against the *Bat*, a semi-social and sporting weekly. Blair, the plaintiff, had come out of the fight several thousand pounds richer in pocket, but with a ruined reputation. The counsel for the defense had proved beyond all manner of doubt that Blair was on intimate terms with a certain group of card playing men who were never allowed to enter the decent clubs. That he had been ignorant of their true characters did not seem to count for much except that the hard and fast English libel laws do not permit such attacks in print.

"He'll have to hook it," said Harbeson, a critic who had an evening paper open in his hands. "There's nothing else; he's done for."

"Too bad he didn't ask advice when they first went after him," mused Corcoran. "There's only one thing to do in such cases—pay—pay—pay! I always do."

The men looked across at him half laughing, the two women indignantly, as though he had personally offended them.

"Pay blackmail!" ejaculated Harbeson hotly. "Why, it's confession—it's cowardice—it's criminal!"

"It's safe, too," said Lord Maurice, a young oldish-looking man whose wife was staring at him across the table with distress in her eyes.

"Admit nothing; ask for proofs!" exclaimed Harbeson excitedly.

"But when they happen to have the proofs, my dear old chap?" inquired Corcoran softly.

"Half the time they haven't. In Blair's case the lawyers worked up most of that evidence later on. They get hold of some flimsy rumor—"

"That's the game!" said Delatour, the painter, with a sad finality in his tone. "When they first rush you, you can't tell just how much they really know. If a woman's name is in it, what is there one can do?"

"Fight them!" said Miss Dangerfield, Corcoran's beautiful leading woman. "That sort always run from a good fight." She spoke through her clenched teeth in her regular stage fashion.

"Blair was such a decent sort of chap," exclaimed Lady Maurice.

"So it seems," commented her husband cynically.

"Here is the way they do it," explained Delatour in expert style as one who knew: "They send you a polite

inquiry as to some facts or gossip that has been handed in to them for publication. They wish to verify it before printing. Now how can you tell just how much they have on you?"

"I should deny it point blank and kick out the messenger," cried Harbeson.

"In that case the next week's paper will come out with a discreetly veiled but unmistakably indentifiable reference with hints as to more scandal to come," went on the artist. "Your friends begin to cut you everywhere. They don't know what to think of it."

"Exactly," spoke up St. Felix, Corcoran's friend and secretary. "You may boil up all you wish, but the easiest way is to hush them up. They're cheap. Everyone pays."

"Horrible!" said Lady Maurice, flushing angrily. "Surely, all London isn't shaking in its shoes for its hidden crimes! We're not all rotters, are we? Characters can't be smashed like eggs!"

St. Felix laughed horribly—so much so that it annoyed the speaker until he ceased. Miss Dangerfield delicately began to peel a big plum.

"Why can't people behave themselves?" she asked ingenuously.

"That was the first question asked after the affair in Eden," suggested Corcoran over his black grapes.

"There's only one honorable thing to do," persisted Lady Maurice, who seemed to have recovered her poise: "to understand fully—"

"And keep—the Eleventh Commandment," smiled St. Felix, quoting: "Thou Shalt Not Be Found Out!"

"Bosh!" Miss Dangerfield tossed her head proudly at him. "I shouldn't give them a shilling. I'd die first! I'd call up Scotland Yard!"

"That's what poor Blair did," sighed Delatour, "and now look at the naughty thing!"

"The guilty will always have to suffer," began Lady Maurice, while her husband grinned sardonically. The butler served the liqueurs in long-stemmed tinted glasses like morning glories. There was a certain air of disapproval of the argument in his soft, felt-shod manner.

"Come now," laughed Corcoran, "let us talk like human beings—entirely grown up. Take our little party here tonight."

"Exactly," approved St. Felix—"even as you and I!"

"Well?" haughtily demanded Miss Dangerfield, her brows drawn and terrible.

"We have not been found out; that is all," declared Corcoran coolly.

"Oh!" cried Lady Maurice indignantly. She looked at her husband for protection, but he gazed coldly along his cigar.

"We are a representatively decent group of Londoners—I will not go so far as to say that we are respectable," continued Corcoran with mock seriousness.

"That would be too insulting," laughed Harbeson, listening intently and watching Lady Maurice's lips, that alternately twitched and smiled as though she were between laughing and crying.

"We have, I take it," propounded Corcoran clearly, "murdered no one; nor have we robbed any banks or run off with plate and jewels."

They were all intent now, leaning forward over the table, the golden lights flickering on their faces. Parkers placed copper bowls of water in which rose leaves floated. Lady Maurice had put up her fan as a shield against Harbeson's look through the shadow.

"Yet I will venture to say," continued Corcoran, "that over each head hangs the proverbial sword of some sort—an error—a moment's halt—an inherited secret, not always heavy, maybe rusty with years and tears—yet it is there—and there we prefer it to stay."

A curious silence fell as the actor's deep voice proclaimed his sentence on them all. Only Maurice dared to joke.

"What a fearful life you must lead!" he interposed. "And what a lot it must cost!"

"Rot!" jeered Miss Dangerfield. "He talks like a four-act screamer. We don't pretend to be angels!"

"Be merciful to us poor sinners!" intoned St. Felix.

"Amen," said Delatour piously.

The bell tinkled and relieved a

strained situation that had lost its savor. The women were angry, the men troubled. Memory seemed to have called up ghosts of the past, and they sat among the guests each with his own.

Parkers entered with a queer-looking letter on a silver tray and brought it to Corcoran, who seemed annoyed at the interruption. He glanced at it without touching it. The direction on the envelope was typed, but had been blurred into a black smear so as to be indecipherable.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the butler apologetically, "but the messenger said it was to be handed in directly. It is quite wet, sir, owing to the rain."

Corcoran peered at it questioningly. "It is impossible to make out the name," he said. "But 'The Albany, Apartment 18,' is plain enough. It may be for some of you. Shall I open it?"

The women assented eagerly. The men seemed a bit nervous. Corcoran took the letter, nodded dismissal to the man and gingerly opened the wet flap of the envelope. He took out a soiled slip of paper and eyed it queerly as though going over it several times.

It was a handwritten note, although the outside had been typewritten. He passed it to St. Felix with a short laugh.

"Can you make it out?" he asked.

"Read it—read it!" cried Lady Maurice feverishly. "Then we can decide whom it is for."

St. Felix's eyes met Corcoran's for a moment; then he began to read slowly and thickly, with pauses as though to be sure about a word:

This line is to warn you that the matter you thought dead and long buried has come to light, and is being peddled in Fleet Street tonight with photographs and letters. You had better get the Dover boat, but even that may be too late. Get away.

"Let me see it!" hissed Delatour, reaching for it.

St. Felix gave it to him, his own face

white. Delatour put up his glass and read it again aloud. "Deuced odd, isn't it?" he mused.

Harbeson's hand snapped it from him. Miss Dangerfield was fingering her lips, her eyes blazing. Lady Maurice rose and walked about the room.

"It's a joke!" she exclaimed. "Just a rotten joke!" Her husband had crumpled down in his chair, his face from the light.

"Let us have our game," spoke Corcoran at last; "it is of no consequence to us."

"I won't play tonight," said Miss Dangerfield; "I feel ill—it's too warm here." Yet she shivered.

St. Felix sidled up to Corcoran. "It couldn't be—" he began in his ear.

Corcoran shot him a look. "Sh—h," he said. "Don't talk rot!" Then aside in a whisper, he ordered: "See what's sailing this morning."

"Where?" queried St. Felix nervously.

"Anywhere," snapped Corcoran.

Delatour came to the doorway. He had on his fur coat and carried Miss Dangerfield's cloak.

"It's raining like the devil!" he remarked, and she went to him and stood while he slipped the wrap over her shoulders. Lord and Lady Maurice asked Parkers to call them a cab. With half-spoken good nights, the party broke up, although Corcoran tried to rally them. The wretched scrawl had broken up his party.

It lay like a blot on the white lace cloth among the yellow lights and the primroses when Parkers came back into the emptied room. The man's eyes were curious, his lips furtive. He had been listening. He took up the slip of paper and read it, his face grown livid.

Then he threw his arms above his head with a terrible agonized cry. Blood foamed to his lips and he fell heavily face down on the floor. He had recognized the writing.



ANEMONE

By Pierre Vivante

IN the midst of the wood, where bare trees stood—
On the bleak, stark hill—in the dell,
The Spirit of Spring, a dainty thing,
Came to earth for a time to dwell.

As pink as the dawn, and her pureness drawn
From the snows that the skies had spilled;
Her wild alarms in the wanton arms
Of the madcap Wind were stilled.

“O my Lover-Wind, leave me not behind,”
She breathed, “when you speed away!”
Though his gentle touch told he loved her much,
He murmured, “I may not stay,

“For whence I blow, and whither I go
Is a riddle no man may solve;
O’er seas I sweep, and o’er earth I creep,
For as long as worlds revolve.”

But her beauty grew as the moments flew,
And fast but faint came her breath,
As with gentle sighs he kissed her eyes
Till she drooped to earth in death.



“**W**HAT made him sick?”
“Drinking other people’s health.”



LEVITY is the soul of grit.



ONE touch of scandal makes the whole world chin.

IN THE RUE VIEUX ANGE

By Paul Scott Mowrer

IT had been a magnificent wedding. Even those residents of the Rue Vieux Ange who had not been invited for the coach ride and the old-fashioned breakfast at the Pond of Ursines were agreed on this point. Yet when all was said and done, there remained the question, doubly insistent: How had the black-eyed bride's good mother, Madame Bonnet, been able to command the means necessary for such festivity?

Except in the tiny shop where, since the demise of her husband four years earlier, Madame Bonnet had herself successfully re-covered the neighborhood umbrellas and put new ferrules on the neighborhood canes, everybody was discussing the matter. This was no marvel, for one does not come by such a juicy morsel for speculative gossip every day in the year, even in the Old Quarter. Next door, at the emporium of newspapers and notions presided over by Madame Vertet, who was also a widow with a marriageable daughter, Madame Zuté, the druggist's wife, had stepped in to give it as *her* opinion that Madame Bonnet was a shrewd one.

"You may well say that," agreed Madame Vertet, knitting faster than ever under the stimulus of conversation. "Was it not Madame Bonnet herself who told me, after she had put away Monsieur Bonnet—did she not say with her own lips, and wiping the tears from her eyes every minute, 'Madame Vertet,' said she, 'I tell you as if you were my own sister,' said she, 'that whatever Monsieur Bonnet's virtues may have been, the habit of saving was not one of them. Now he has gone and left us as poor as church mice,' said she.

Yet here she is, not four years after, marrying off her daughter as if she had lived all her life in a grand apartment by the Park Monceau. To say truth, I don't understand it."

"Nor I," chimed in demurely Amédée, the daughter and sole heir of the house of Vertet.

"Perhaps she has secretly come into a legacy," suggested Madame Zuté.

"Perhaps!" echoed Madame Vertet skeptically.

"Or perhaps," continued the caller, "she exaggerated a little when she told you Monsieur Bonnet had left her poor as a church mouse."

Madame Vertet gave a flounce that sent her ball of worsted bounding to the floor.

"Madame Zuté, look at me!" she commanded, shooting an incidental frown at her daughter. "You see a ripe woman, do you not? And do you believe anyone could make such exaggerations and me not know it? No, no! I tell you, Madame Zuté, there's a mystery here; in the umbrella business one does not make a fortune in four years."

The druggist's wife sighed. Her temperament was pacific. "Still," she argued reminiscently, "it was a magnificent wedding. The Pond was lovely, and I haven't had such a dance since I was married. And my husband—did you not find he looked beautiful? Why, his dress suit became him as if it were his own!"

Madame Vertet, at first red in the face from stooping after her ball of worsted, had now regained her customary color. She was not a woman to be thrown off the point. She resumed where she had left off.

"Yes, Madame Zuté, a mystery! It is I who tell you so. In my opinion, if we knew where Madame Bonnet really goes every day when she pretends she is going to weep tears on the moss of her husband's grave, we would know more than we know at present."

At that instant the demure Amédée gave a warning hiss and pointed to the front of the shop. The older women looked just in time to see a stout figure pass by, head and shoulders enveloped in a drab shawl. The exchange of significant glances told plainly that this was the very individual, bent on the very errand, just under discussion.

"Regular as the hand of a clock!" muttered Madame Vertet.

"Oh, la, la!" cried Madame Zuté, giving a start at the word "clock." "Is it really five? Good day, madame. Good day, mademoiselle. I must go at once, or my stew will never be done in time for dinner."

She left the little shop just as the paper boy arrived with the first batch of evening news. It was the ancient duty of Amédée to fold the open sheets into a size suitable for the pockets of gentlemen clients. But this evening she did not begin at once. Instead, she hung idly in the doorway, staring dreamily down the street in the direction which Madame Bonnet had taken a few minutes before.

Now if economy of money was the first virtue in Madame Vertet's philosophy of life, economy of time was the second. She had no patience with dawdlers.

"Eh, bien!" she called. "Are you asleep?"

Amédée appeared not to hear.

"Amédée!"

The girl turned reluctantly to the table whereon lay the papers. Before taking up the topmost, she breathed a sigh which seemed to come from the depths of her maturely round figure. Her mother eyed her attentively, becoming so interested, in fact, that for once she forgot to knit.

"What are you thinking about?" she suddenly demanded.

Amédée hesitated, then said: "Blanche Bonnet is younger than I."

"What do you mean?" snapped the elder woman. "You think you ought to be married, too, I suppose! Well, you might just as well get the idea out of your head at once. A nice husband you would get with the dowry I could give you! Oh, there's no use denying it. We are poor. But if you will just tell me where this wonderful tree is that Madame Bonnet goes to every day to pick riches from, I will tell you when I shall set about finding you a husband. *Voilà!*"

The girl flushed. For an instant something like a flash of feeling illuminated her doll's eyes. "You know that's impossible," she retorted.

"Why don't you offer to go with Madame Bonnet to the cemetery?" suggested the mother.

"No use. Madame Chauval has already tried that. Didn't I tell you that only a few weeks ago she received two bead wreaths from her cousin in Orleans who is in the business? Her grandfather on her mother's side is buried in the Cimetière du Montparnasse; so she offered to lend one wreath to Madame Bonnet until she should have use for it, provided madame would go to the cemetery with her to let her help arrange it on Monsieur Bonnet's grave. Madame Bonnet agreed at first, but then when the time came she said she had a headache, and she shut herself up and didn't stir out that day."

"It's the first time I ever knew her to refuse a chance to borrow," commented Madame Vertet.

That closed the subject for the time being. But Madame Vertet's fertile brain was by no means at rest. She foresaw that unless she soon took some step toward settling Amédée in matrimony, the Rue Vieux Ange, whose communal perceptions were far from stunted, would begin to make odious comparisons. She resolved, in short, to study her neighbor.

By this method she established two facts. The first was that Madame Bonnet, in going her daily pilgrimage, always took the Metro in the Boulevard St. Béatrice. The second, which was in Madame Vertet's opinion the more sig-

nificant, had to do with a psychological change which seemed often to come over Madame Bonnet while she was thus absent. She might leave the shop in such a temper that the very cat would trot silently under the counter out of her way, but she always returned smiling, with a cheerful word for everyone. That, thought the Rue Vieux Ange, is the wholesome effect of unloading one's grief. But Madame Vertet thought otherwise; for in her heart there had already sprouted the germ of that most insatiable of maladies, envy. With every day it seemed to increase. It bit, it stung; it gave her no rest. It even robbed her of sleep, until she one day found her skirt lapping over a good three inches extra where she pinned it together at the waist. She could no longer look upon the demure eyes of Amédée without a special pang of distress. Yes, it was high time her daughter should marry.

She accordingly dressed herself one mellow afternoon of early spring in a black dress and hat and a thick black veil which well concealed her features. Her mind was made up: she would solve her neighbor's secret at any cost. At the usual time, watching from the back of her emporium of newspapers and notions, she saw Madame Bonnet proceed solemnly by the window. She took time to call Amédée from the back room to watch the shop, then stole forth like a shadow. At the Metro station in the Boulevard St. Béatrice she hung back from the platform until one train had passed, and took the next, two minutes later. She changed cars and ascended at the Boulevard Raspail without once catching a glimpse of her quarry's drab shawl. She turned into the Boulevard Edgar Quinet, and keeping close to the cemetery wall, peering both ahead of her and at the row of tombstone shops and flower stands across the way, continued to the main gate. There was Madame Bonnet, sauntering up the principal drive of the cemetery! Fearful of a disconcerting meeting in the narrow lanes among the vaults, she did not follow farther, but crossed the boulevard and hovered in front of a florist's win-

dows, as if studying the displays, but really keeping a relentless watch on the gate.

Hardly five minutes passed before Madame Bonnet reappeared. To the surprise of Madame Vertet, she did not immediately leave the gateway, but after exchanging a word with the uniformed lodgekeeper, took her stand in the shadow of the wall, just where people departing from the cemetery to go to the station must pass.

A-tremble with excitement, Madame Vertet sidled farther up the boulevard, but not so far that the descending twilight obscured the object of her vigilance. It was closing time. The voice of the lodgekeeper, warning the loiterers and the watchers at the graves, fell languidly upon the evening air. Still Madame Bonnet stood motionless in the shadow of the wall. People began to come out from among the tombs. Feeling more secure in the lessening light, Madame Vertet drew her veil closer, and furtively crossing to the center of the boulevard, moved slowly nearer along the line of trees.

What was Madame Bonnet waiting for? What was she doing?

Several times the watcher thought she saw men turn to address the woman at the gate. Desperate with curiosity, all her suspicions raging within her, she advanced until she was directly opposite. There was a bench. She sat down in such a way that a tree obscured her from the gaze she feared. Hardly had she adjusted herself to peep forth past the tree trunk, when she saw two women in mourning come slowly out at the gateway, a little boy between them. Madame Bonnet spoke to these people. Yes, she was sure of it! In a vague way she seemed almost able to distinguish the words, but for the moment, at least, their sense eluded her. The two women were passing along unheeding, when the little boy, tugging at their skirts, caused them to stop. One fumbled in her pocket, and the little boy, returning a few steps, placed something in the outstretched hand of Madame Bonnet.

Saints of the calendar! Was it possible? In a flash the meaning of the words

that had puzzled her leaped into the mind of Madame Vertet. Over and over the discovering phrase repeated itself:

"A little charity, monsieur? A little charity, madame?"

Like a young girl at the climax of a tragic play, Madame Vertet hung spell-bound on the slightest move of her unconscious neighbor. Nearly everyone who passed contributed something. The sentiment of Latin countries favors the giving of alms; and when one has been among the dead one's heart is softened.

There—they were closing the gates! Madame Bonnet had disappeared in the gloom. Madame Vertet, dizzy with the confused emotions aroused by the sight of the one dénouement in the world she would never have expected, walked at top speed to another quarter. She was panting tremendously when she took the train for home; and had her fellow passengers been interested in the study of physiognomy, they might have remarked a strange compression of her lips, a strange glitter of determination in the narrow eyes under her high-arched brows.

If Amédée remarked these unusual signs that evening when they sat at dinner in the little room back of the shop, she said nothing. She did not even show great surprise when her mother, leaning back at last with her cup of coffee in one hand and her saucer in the other, asked in a tone more than ordinarily benevolent:

"My child, do you remember a conversation we had some time ago on the subject of marriage? *Bien!* I promise you that if all goes well, as I think it will, in two years you will have your desire—provided," she added humorously, "someone can be found of sufficient blindness to take you."

And Amédée, like the dutiful daughter she was, responded: "*Très bien, maman.*"

"Have you—anyone in particular in mind?" demanded her mother.

"*Non, maman.*"

"Have you no preference?"

"*Non, maman*—so long as he is nice. Only"—here the nineteen-year-old Amé-

dée gulped with emotion—"I don't want to stay a *vieille fille* all my life."

"Nor do I wish you to," her mother gave assurance. "So just leave it to me and everything will arrange itself, even"—here she smiled complacently—"even to the wedding breakfast at the Pond of Ursines."

Madame Vertet passed the greater part of the next day in a state of deep preoccupation. At four o'clock she put on her things and took the Metro, as on the preceding afternoon, to the cemetery. She thus reached the main gate a full hour ahead of the time of Madame Bonnet's scheduled arrival. After a nervous little walk of inspection down two of the cemetery avenues and back, and then down the Boulevard Edgar Quinet and back, she suddenly stopped with determination beside the gate, drew her knitted cape closer about her shoulders and waited. In a minute or so an elderly gentleman drew near. Madame Vertet put forth a hypocritical hand and whined:

"A little charity, monsieur?"

The elderly gentleman mechanically dropped into her palm a franc, which Madame Vertet at once transferred to the purse in her underskirt pocket. But this, her first transaction for the honor of Amédée and the house of Vertet, had not escaped the eye of the uniformed lodgekeeper. He walked up to her pompously.

"Move on—move on," he repeated in a professional tone.

"Why?" demanded Madame Vertet. "I'm not hurting you, am I?"

"This place is taken," said the man.

"You are right; it is," retorted Madame Vertet.

"By another lady," protested the lodgekeeper.

"My neighbor!" sniffed Madame Vertet.

"Did she send you?"

"Certainly not. I don't take orders from her."

"Then you'll have to move on," the keeper insisted.

"I guess not!" replied Madame Vertet coolly. "She doesn't own this cemetery, and you don't either."

"That's all right," said the man angrily, "but she's paid for the right to receive charity at this gate, and I'm here to protect her rights."

"Paid!" echoed the astonished woman. "Paid whom?"

"Paid me," answered the keeper complacently, "so just move along now." And he took hold of her arm.

"Wait a minute," cried Madame Vertet, giving him a vigorous jab with her elbow. "What does she pay you? Maybe I'll give more than she will."

The keeper looked at her doubtfully. Then he said:

"Ten sous a day."

"I'll give fifteen, and here they are." Already she had gathered her skirt up to her waist, drawn forth her purse and was counting out the coppers.

The man took them.

"Now listen," commanded Madame Vertet, with the air natural to one who has just purchased a privilege. "When this other woman arrives, you are to tell her she can't come here any more—understand?"

The keeper nodded and returned to his post, and Madame Vertet resumed her watch for contributors to the dowry of Amédée. At the end of half an hour she had nearly three francs. Then, coming down the boulevard, she saw Madame Bonnet. The latter, who was somewhat stout, drew up before her all panting, evidently prepared to use force, if necessary, to evict the interloper. But when she recognized her neighbor, she put her hand to her throat, emitted a gurgling sound and took three steps backward.

"*Nom d'un chien!*" she finally managed to gasp. "You? It's you?"

"Yes, it's I," said Madame Vertet, cool and superior.

"Keeper!" called Madame Bonnet, suddenly growing very red in the face. "Put this woman out! Put this woman out, do you hear?"

The lodgekeeper, who had been watching from afar, strolled near.

"I'm sorry," he said, addressing the astonished Madame Bonnet, "but this lady's going to have this place hereafter. You'll have to hunt another stand."

Madame Vertet gave him an approving nod and glared at her neighbor.

The latter was beaten, and showed it. "Spy, spy!" she muttered under her breath.

"What do you say?" demanded Madame Vertet threateningly.

"I said— How much does she give you?" said Madame Bonnet, wheeling suddenly on the keeper.

The man shifted his feet uneasily and did not reply.

"I'll give you a franc!" cried Madame Bonnet.

It was Madame Vertet's turn to grow red.

"You sha'n't!" she hissed. "You don't dare! If you do"—she paused dramatically—"if you do, I'll tell everybody in the street how you got your daughter's dowry!"

It was a master stroke. Madame Bonnet gave a long growl, as if filled with horror at the mere thought of such treachery, turned and walked down the boulevard.

But she had hardly departed before she came back. Gone was her anger, gone the black looks.

"Madame Vertet," she began suavely, "tell me one thing. Is it for Amédée you are doing this?"

"Who else?" answered the victor haughtily.

"Why, then," continued Madame Bonnet, beaming, "I have a proposition to make. It's my brother's boy, Charles. He's thirty years old and wants to settle down. He has had his experiences, without doubt, but he is a good boy, take him altogether, and his father will give him a nice little sum and a share in his hardware shop if he will consent to marry. You would never find a better match for your daughter, I'm sure."

Madame Vertet grew very grave. A moment she remained as in deep thought, then she said solemnly:

"Madame Bonnet, I have misjudged you. You are a true friend. If you will do me the honor to take a cup of tea with me this evening, we will discuss this at greater length. When young people want to marry, the sooner it's arranged the better."

MATUTINAL MUSINGS

By Tom P. Morgan

THERE is placid pleasure to be found in faring forth at early dawn, and also opportunity for simple philosophy. The world is drably dark, and seems oddly small, and the sky very wide and high.

The sags and hollows are still somber with night's lingering shadows, but the mist is rising smokily out of them, with here and there a hill poking its head up where it's lighter. Away off yonder a chanticler's clarion challenge breaks the hush that comes when the new day pauses to gather strength for bursting forth. And so near that it almost makes you jump sounds the insolent yell of another rooster. There's another and another; far and near, from all directions, they shout defiance to each other. It is said that you can prevent a rooster from waking you in the morning by fixing a board the right distance above his perch so that when he attempts to stretch up to crow he whacks his head—a good deal on the same principle, I presume, that you keep a donkey from braying by annexing a big enough log to his tail to keep it down. Now, why wouldn't that be a first rate scheme to work on some of these statesmen that talk too much (which, if you ask me, is 'most all of 'em) and—I mean, of course, bumping their heads some way!

It is lighter in the hollows now, and there is considerable yellow and pink in the east. The birds begin to tune up, and—Well, there's Doc Potter, slamming along behind Old Hickory—Doc asleep in the phaeton as usual and Hickory whacking up hill and down dale at the same gait he started on, prob'ly with his eyes shut. Good thing the phaeton rattles so and Hickory is white,

or they'd run over somebody every night or two, the way they go pounding along. 'Tain't necessary, anyhow, for Doc has about all the patients he can 'tend to, without making 'em. When they start out Doc slaps with the reins and giddaps the horse into the gait he wants to go at, 'cording to how big a hurry he's in, and Hickory keeps up that lick till they get there, regardless.

Well, and—there! They've gone to Pritchett's, *as usual*. Pritchett is the handy man of the village—feller with too few whiskers, or too many, 'cording to what your taste in whiskers is—and has the least gumption about money making, and the biggest darned family, even if they do 'pear to be just about the healthiest and happiest, 'round here. The Doctor's nag has the habit of turning up to Pritchett's gate the same as a milk wagon horse does at the door of a regular customer.

I see many things as I saunter along that give me quiet satisfaction. Once old Judge Barkalow, who could get drunk with more leonine dignity than anybody since Daniel Webster's time, got considerably lit up and went to sleep some time in the night on a fresh laid cement sidewalk. The hours glided by; the black turned to gray, the gray to silver, and then to gold. The world awoke, and the Irishmen who had laid the walk came and woke the Judge. I arrived just as they were prying him out with crowbars and language, and while they were doing so he practically made it appear that he was granting them a favor by permitting them to pry him out at all. About that time the gorgeous chariot of the sun god popped up from behind the eastern hills, and I mosied along home.

STERRETT'S AFFINITY

By Gordon Johnstone

STERRETT didn't care much for the play. Domestic drama made no appeal to this *blasé* young gentleman of twenty-four. How he found himself in the Crackett Theater heaven only knows, and heaven was mercifully silent. To say that he was bored would be putting it kindly—he was buried. That is, he was until the middle of the first act, when the Sweet Young Thing appeared.

Then a miracle happened. Sterrett rose from the dead. She was a dream—tall and slender, with eyes like blue saucers and a crown of red hair. To Sterrett the beauty of the Troy lady was eclipsed. She wore a soft white dress decorated about the waist with a pink ribbon, and carried a large white bonnet trimmed with pink roses. Toward the climax of the act the Sweet Young Thing looked into Sterrett's eyes and the gloomy theater became the Garden of Eden with Sterrett as Adam stalking through the olive groves to keep an appointment with Eve and nothing to hide him from scrutinizing eyes but a draped moonbeam. Then the curtain fell and he consulted his program. The Sweet Young Thing's name was Betty O'Neal. Surely a *nom de plume*. No child born into this vale of tears would retain a name like that in the theater. It would have passed through a reincarnation and blossomed forth as Riena Larue or something equally marshmallowy.

Sterrett rose, walked out in the lobby, lit a cigarette and continued his dreaming with a gallery of prominent actors staring down on him from the walls. This was a new experience with Sterrett—not the framed Thespians but his emotions. To be sure, the moths of the

chorus and the butterflies of the sextette had on many occasions thrown him burning glances—but this was different. The bell rang, and he made his way down the chattering aisle anxious to be in his seat when the curtain went up. The orchestra played "The Blue Waltz" dreamily and the curtain rose on a ballroom scene. All domestic dramas have a ballroom where the Good Young Man can go wrong. As he's destined to go to the dogs that's the place for it. A woman may go to the devil in the open, but a man must have a dress suit and a ballroom. Sterrett sat and watched the hero who had made a success in life drink champagne and lose his heart to a dashing adventuress who would have been more comfortable knitting socks for her grandchildren.

There was little of interest in this to Sterrett. The Sweet Young Thing was still in the village, so the hero said, but of course we knew she wouldn't stay there; that would have spoiled the author's broth. Sterrett watched the Good Young Man go from bad to worse. Success is a terrible thing and should be incorporated among the thou-shalt-not's of our daily commandments. The Good Young Man drank wine, smoked gilt-tipped cigarettes, kissed the dashing purple lady on her pearly shoulder and cut up something awful until the lady's husband arrived on the scene and discovered them. Then the feathers flew, or I should say the hero's flew, together with his watch and chain and a large wallet—they have no other kind on the stage. In fact, no self-respecting car conductor would permit the stage wallet to pass the door; it would be stored on the platform. The Good Young Man

could not accuse a lady, so just at that moment when the infamous pair had gone off in a huff the Sweet Young Thing emerged from the conservatory.

The conservatory is another appendix of the playwright that no surgeon has ever succeeded in removing—at least without causing great pain. How the Sweet Young Thing got there the Lord only knows—and the author; but virtue must triumph even in a ballroom. How it could even exist in that hot perfumed atmosphere is a Belasco mystery. Sterrett, who up to this time had been enjoying an after-dinner nap, answered his alarm clock, sat up and took a fresh hand. Oh, the melody of that voice! In comparison nightingales were fourth raters. She was telling the hero she would take him back to the green hills and the village nestling among them. There he could work—work—work. She didn't specify, but I think she had rough work in mind. And then she smiled—not on the G. Y. M. but straight at Sterrett. There could be no mistake—they were affinities; his heart told him so. When the curtain fell the Sweet Young Thing threw herself into the arms of the hero and looked deep into a pair of hungry eyes in the front row.

Sterrett groped his way to the box office and asked the man to call a messenger. Hastily he wrote a note on the back of his card begging his florist to deliver two dozen pink roses to the boy and charge them to his account. It was a rush order, and he would have the usher pass them over the footlights in the last act. The curtain rose again and found Sterrett in his seat. The scene was the one used in the first act, and the Good Young Man was being pestered to death by the purple lady and her jack-in-the-box husband. The Sweet Young Thing stood between the hero and ruin. Oh, the strength of these Sweet Young Things in drama! Frail are the children of the gods, frail but mighty. She saw little of Sterrett in that act; she was too busy. When it was over, and the purple lady and the husband foiled, Sterrett walked on his neighbors' corns in his haste to reach the box office. No flowers—no boy. Sterrett puffed a cigarette

and waited. Time flew. He lit another cigarette. The bell rang. And yet no boy. Those around him threw their half-finished smokes away and passed in. Still he waited. The framed favorites of Thespis smiled cynically down on him. It was maddening. Sterrett shot the number of his seat in at the window with orders to send them in by the usher.

The act was on when he passed the inner door and groped his way in darkness to his seat. Things were progressing merrily on the stage. There was a barn dance in full swing in honor of something or other. The Sweet Young Thing and he of the washed soul were making pretty speeches to each other on a load of hay conveniently deposited in one corner of the stage. The dancers grew boisterous, as people do who are in the habit of dancing in barns, and Sterrett was thinking what a splendid time this would be to pass over the flowers—if he only had them. He turned his head and squinted back up the aisle. All he saw was a light at the end of the dim passage and an usher hanging on a post for support. When he turned to the stage the S. Y. T. had entered the dance and was as completely lost as if the hay had swallowed her. The comedian—I think he was the comedian; he was fat, anyway, and wiped his mouth on his sleeve (to laughter)—the comedian was telling the hero that the best way to get milk from a cow was to milk her. Whereupon the G. Y. M., having a sense of humor, laughed.

Not so Sterrett. He was watching the aisle and couldn't find a laugh in it. The voice of the Sweet Young Thing brought him back to consciousness. She was married now, and her voice had taken on gigantic proportions. It could be heard above any ordinary din like a barn dance. She had much to say, and the hero helped her say it. The dance ceased and the rustics passed out into the night waving glad farewells. Sterrett waited for the flowers and stewed. Finally the comedian thought he would go home, too. Sterrett hoped he would—and that the boy would come. There was yet time. All that remained on the

stage was the Sweet Young Thing, the hero and the load of hay. The live stock had evidently donned pajamas at the beginning of the play and crept up into the loft to sleep. The Sweet Young Thing moved toward the door. She was telling her husband that she was going to her duties. What they were I don't know. One doesn't milk cows at night—or does one? Then she went away with a parting word to the hero, and Sterrett came out of his dream to find a bank of roses in his lap and an usher standing over him. The curtain fell. Immediately all was bustle and light, the audience getting into their wraps or overcoats.

Sterrett sat staring at the flowers. A fat girl on his left snickered. He wished he could hide them under his seat, but no ordinary seat would cover them. Suddenly he sat up with an idea. He would take them to the stage door and deliver them in person. Using a side exit of the theater, he made his way there. Sterrett waited on the curb as one after another the stage hands and actors passed out, looking him over curiously. Being sensitive, he retreated to the opposite side of the street. The Sweet Young Thing was in no hurry to leave the theater. Sterrett found himself musing on the loneliness of such a life. Perhaps she was alone in the world. He shivered over such a prospect and glanced up toward Broadway. Again his eyes returned to the electric bulb over the little door. At last! Standing under the dim glare she made a winsome picture. Sterrett crossed the street. She held out her hand with a friendly welcome. He took it wonderingly.

"I thought I recognized you, Mr.

Sterrett," she cried—"though you perhaps don't remember me."

"Pardon me," he stammered, "but I really don't."

"Of course not," she laughed. "How could you? You were too young then. But perhaps you might. Do you remember the girl that used to wheel you around in a go-cart when you were a little fellow?"

"My—my nurse?" he asked, longing for a hole to crawl into.

"Yes," she smiled. "I went on the stage that same year. That was a long time ago, wasn't it?" she added with a sigh.

"Yes," he stammered, backing away.

"A very long—time ago."

"You're not complimentary," she said.

"I beg your pardon."

"Don't go," she added as he continued to retreat. "I want you to meet my son. He's almost your own age. You'll like him. He's a fine boy. But then you saw him—he's the leading man. His father plays the heavy part. They'll be out in a minute."

The door opened and the hero and the villain stepped out. The Sweet Young Thing introduced them.

"Thank you for coming back," she said, offering her hand. "It was quite like old times, and awfully good of you. Good night."

Sterrett watched the trio swing arm in arm down the dark street. Without glancing at the roses, he jammed them into an ash barrel on the curb.

"Back to the kindergarten, Bobby," he muttered as he turned toward Broadway. "You've got a great deal to learn."



CLUBLEIGH—You tell your wife everything, do you not?
LIARBIEGH—Yes, everything. She guesses the rest.



BEN JONSON appears to be the first Englishman on record who dropped his "h's."

THE OLD SHIP MAST

By Louise Driscoll

FAR I grew on a lonely hill—
Brother of mine, do you stand there still?
Long is the time and long the way—
Brother of mine, are you green today?
None of my high kin stood so high,
Braving the wind and the storm, as I
Spreading my boughs to the brooding sky—
Brother of mine, do you stand there still?

I have taken the things of the sea to me
As those of my blood and family,
But the little green leaves call to me yet—
Brother of mine, can a tree forget?
Men will not wait for the wind to blow,
And the mast and the spreading sail must go,
And the steamship, scorning the miles, I know,
Brother of mine, replaces me.

Once when a great ship passed me by—
Brother of mine, how fast they fly!
I watched the wake of her throbbing keel
With revery that the dying feel,
A long, white lady abreast the sea,
Making her way right royally;
“Ah!” cried the heart of my sail to me.
“What shall not man to the sea reveal?”

Far, oh, far, is my wooded hill—
Brother of mine, do you stand there still?
My little green leaves are a memory—
Brother, have you forgotten me?
Man gave me a sail to be my bride,
And I learned the ways of the wind and tide,
But I dream, at last, of a green hillside—
Brother of mine, do you grow there still?



“**I**s he a gentleman farmer?”
“No; he’s always sowing seeds of discontent, and raising the devil.”

THE BLAZE ON THE MOUNTAIN

By Elliott Flower

HIGH up on a mountain ridge, overlooking valleys on either side, stood a little cabin, and in front of the cabin, contentedly smoking, sat Jim Trent, Dan Coogan, Percival Merideth and myself.

Jim Trent was our guide. He it was who had brought us to this roos on the ridge, and upon him we relied to get us back to civilization. We had set out to do a little hunting, but so far we had done none. Merideth had noted this cabin standing out against the skyline, had learned that it was the lookout station of a forest ranger, and had expressed a desire to visit it and talk with the ranger.

Thereupon Jim Trent had piloted us to the cabin. Jim was an old man in years, but young in body. His had been an outdoor life, and his physical vigor was unimpaired. Long before we reached the cabin—indeed, long before we even saw it—we had discovered that Jim could outwalk, outrun and outjump us, and we had no doubt that he would also outshoot us when we reached the locality of abundant game to which he had promised to guide us. His age showed only in a certain deliberateness of movement, and even that was lacking when there was any real occasion for quick action.

Dan Coogan was a forest ranger and the second in command in that district. He was in the prime of life, strong, clear-eyed, resourceful and a thorough master of his business, as we learned later. Yet he was as deliberate in his talk, except in emergencies, as Jim Trent was in his actions. This deliberation seems to be something that is acquired by men who live much in solitude. Beside Coogan lay a fieldglass, and with this he occa-

sionally swept both valleys and the mountains beyond.

Merideth was English—very much English—but I had long since learned that, in spite of his mannerisms, he was a mighty good fellow and one who could be depended upon in an emergency. He was in this country for a bit of hunting, and circumstances made me his companion.

Thus it happened that we found ourselves at Dan Coogan's cabin on the ridge.

"Dan," said Jim Trent, as we lazily smoked, "what's Bill Tully's station now? He's been moved away, ain't he?"

Coogan took his pipe from his mouth and exhaled the smoke slowly before replying.

"Yes," he said at last, "he's been moved away—in a box."

"Dead!" exclaimed Trent. "I never heard of that."

There was another pause while Coogan took a few deliberate puffs.

"Y' see," he explained at last, "the Guv'ment don't look after its prop'ty the way private owners looks after theirs, and it needs more lookin' after, too. The Guv'ment forests is mostly the hardest to reach, bein' 'way back or 'way up. There's roads cut and everything fixed so's you can reach a fire in forests that's owned by people, and the patrol is better—"

"D'ye mean to say, old chap," interrupted Merideth, "that the owners have their own patrol and fire service?"

"They certain'y do," replied Coogan.

"I fawncied, don't you know," said Merideth, "that your jolly old Uncle Sam did it all."

"Not much he don't," returned Coogan. "He don't even do his own share proper. He don't seem to have no money—not enough, anyway. If there's roads to be cut and more rangers is needed on privit prop'ty, the owners puts up the money prompt, but Uncle Sam don't—well, not hardly. He says we got to do the best we can with what we got, 'cause he has other uses for his money—battleships and things like that. So when a fire starts it's Uncle Sam that gets the worst of it. His forests is pretty sure to be hard to reach and harder to fight a fire in. There ain't roads and there ain't men enough, and the underbrush that carries fire quickest ain't kept cleared out like it should be, and there 'most always ain't any place to stop the fire—any fire lane where you got a chance to hold it. Uncle Sam's too poor, but the privit owners ain't. They're organized in most localities, and the organizations is joined in a central association hereabouts, and there's money ready for whatever's needed."

"Quite interesting, I assure you," put in Merideth, "but I cawn't see what it has to do with the Bill Tully person."

"I'm comin' to that," said Coogan after a few more puffs at his pipe. "The last fire we had broke out right below a Guv'ment forest. The privit rangers kep' it from eatin' down into the prop'ty they was guardin', which wa'n't hard, but there was only a long, narrow clearin', with consider'ble dry grass and underbrush in it, to keep it from climbin' up. Bill Tully was the first Guv'ment ranger on the ground, and he figgered the fire could be held at the clearin'. Course he expected to have help, but he didn't wait for none. You got to go it alone and take your chances in this business. Well, he couldn't git through the fire, so he had to circle it. There prob'ly wa'n't much chance by the time he got there, but he started in alone to hold that fire till help could come. We see where he'd been cleanin' out the fire lane, and we see where he'd made another stand higher up the slope—tryin' to fight a forest fire single-handed!"

"Go on, old chap," urged Merideth.

"That's all," returned Coogan. "Bill

was some charred when we found him."

"But the other rangers, you know," persisted Merideth.

"The fire had spread and they couldn't git through when they come up," explained Coogan. "Poor old Bill was caught fair, but it's a chance we all got to take. A ranger that don't go in alone, without waitin' for help, no matter what the odds is, don't belong on the job, and the other rangers would be the first to kick him out. We got some pride in our force, you know."

We were all silent for a few minutes, thinking of Bill Tully fighting a forest fire single-handed and fighting it up to the last minute of life. What must have been his thoughts when it became clear that he could expect no help, when hope of either rescue or escape had to be abandoned?

Merideth was the first to speak.

"I never knew Bill Tully," he said slowly, "but, d'ye know, I'd rawther like to have shaken hands with him. I'd like to feel that I had shaken hands with that kind of a man. It was a ripping fine thing. What did the Government do about it?"

"The Guv'ment," replied Coogan, "put another man in his place and let it go at that."

"Oh, come, now," expostulated Merideth, "there must have been some appreciation, you know."

"I ain't ever heard of none," returned Coogan.

There was another silence, which was finally broken by Jim Trent.

"What's become of that girl, Dan, that you singed your whiskers for?" he asked.

Coogan's gaze wandered away across the valley to the west and finally rested on the opposite slope. He nodded his head in that direction. "She's over there," he said. "There's a little clearin' that you can't see from here without the glass, and she and her dad lives there. But there wa'n't nothin' much to that story. The boys stretched it."

"Oh, no, there wa'n't nothin' to that—nothin' at all," retorted Trent sarcastically. "It was only a little thing,

like what any store clerk could 'a' done. It ain't worth talkin' about, but *she* don't think so."

Coogan smiled. "Well," he said, "it don't do me no harm to have her lookin' at it the way she does. I'm willin' to be a hero—to her. But it wa'n't much, only I did think once we didn't have any real big chance of gittin' through."

"Oh, no, nothin' at all," agreed Trent. "You only went down a fire lane that was burnin' on both sides and hot enough to cook a steak to a crisp while you was winkin' one eye, and wrapped her in a blanket, and carried her back along that lane, and come out with your whiskers gone and your hair singed and your face and hands blistered and the blanket on fire. I guess I see you. Didn't I blister my own hands on that blazin' blanket? Why, look here, Dan Coogan, what would you call a big thing?"

"I told her dad he was in a dangerous place," returned Coogan, apparently anxious to turn the conversation from himself, "but he wouldn't believe it till he got burned out, and he's in a place that's jest as bad now. He ain't got the sense of a rabbit."

"Ever see her now, Dan?" asked Trent.

Coogan actually blushed. "Well, I can't leave my station long enough to go over there much," he replied, "and it's a long tramp for her to come over here; but I been there twice and she's been here a few times to cook some real grub for me and fix things up a bit in the cabin."

"I say, old chap," put in Merideth, "why don't you have a clergyman here the next time she comes? Then, you know, she wouldn't have to go back."

"A what?" queried Coogan.

"A clergyman, a minister," explained Merideth.

"Oh, a parson!" exclaimed Coogan. "Well, that's worth considerin', but I got to ask her first. I ain't ever got up the nerve to do that yet."

His eyes sought the opposite slope again and finally rested on a little spiral of smoke that was ascending heavenward. He reached for the fieldglass

with his usual deliberation, quite as if he were picking out some object of merely passing interest.

"She's started," he announced a moment later.

"Who's started?" inquired Merideth.

"The fire," replied Coogan.

He put down the glass and entered the cabin. Jim Trent leveled the glass at the spiral of smoke, and then passed it to Merideth, who in turn handed it to me. There could be no doubt about it: there was a fire in the forest on the opposite slope.

In the cabin Coogan was telephoning, still deliberate and with no outward evidence of excitement.

"There's a fire on the east slope of Rocky Ridge, a little south of Tom Tooney's clearin'," we heard him say, and a moment later he emerged from the cabin carrying a blanket. He went at once to a pile of brush that had evidently been prepared for the purpose and touched a match to it. Then he spread the blanket out on the ground and threw a bucket of water over it. After that he piled great masses of moss on the fire and covered it all with the blanket.

"Git to work!" he ordered. "I got to have three more fires."

Jim Trent, Merideth and I began piling up brush, but I did not let this occupation distract my attention from Coogan.

The moss made a dreadful smudge, which the blanket effectually smothered. Coogan lifted one corner of the blanket and a dense mass of smoke shot heavenward. He dropped the blanket, but a moment later lifted it again and released another accumulation of smoke. Four times he did this and then removed the blanket entirely.

"Is it a game?" asked Merideth.

"No," answered Jim Trent severely. "He's telling all the rangers within reach that there's a fire and where it is."

The other piles being ready, moss was heaped on top of them, matches applied, and soon four columns of smoke were rising from the ridge.

"That's for them that didn't see the first signal," explained Trent.

Coogan now went to the cabin and

brought out a collection of axes, mat-tocks and rakes.

"Are you all goin'?" he asked.

We said we were, and he supplied us with the necessary implements for fire fighting. Then we set out on our long tramp, and it was a long one.

The fire, of course, would go up the slope, and it was our business to get above it and stop its advance. If all else failed, we might at least stop it on the ridge and save the forest on the other slope, but to do this it was necessary to make a wide detour. We could not go through the fire, which we could now see had a good start, but must circle it.

Coogan set the pace, and it was a warm one. His long, easy stride did not seem to have much speed, but we discovered that he was going some when we tried to keep up with him, and Merideth complained that he was not entered "for a bally footrace." Neither Coogan nor Trent paid the slightest attention to him, however, and we toiled along after them with the perspiration streaming down our faces.

Occasionally we came upon a ranger or a settler headed in the same general direction, and they fell in with us with scarcely a word.

A quick glance told Coogan all that he needed to know when we reached the ridge. The top was almost barren of vegetation. Here and there a single tree shot up, but for the most part there was a stretch two hundred to three hundred feet wide between the forest on one slope and the forest on the other.

"We can't stop her short of the ridge, boys," Coogan announced, "but we can sure keep her from jumpin' that. Spread out and clear away!"

A line was immediately formed along the ridge, and we went to work clearing away anything and everything that could possibly help to carry the fire across the space intervening between the two wooded slopes. Coogan went from one end of the line to the other, occasionally shifting men the better to guard some particularly dangerous spot. I also noted that he cast many anxious glances toward the northern limit of the advancing line of fire, and I realized

that he was considering the chances of Tom Tooney and his daughter—particularly the daughter. Their cabin was not in the direct line of the fire, but I did not have to be told that it might easily spread to include that, and I admired the self-control that enabled Coogan to stick to his duty as a ranger in the face of this uncertainty as to the safety of the girl. He went about his work methodically, resourcefully, but once I heard him muttering: "You can't tell how long that fool will stick. He ain't got any more sense than a rabbit." The situation was harrowing enough to turn a man's hair gray, but Coogan continued to direct the fight as coolly and as wisely as if he had nothing else on his mind.

The principal danger point was a little ravine that cut through the ridge. There were brush and shrubbery and some small trees in this, and it might easily carry the fire across. Coogan centered the fight here as soon as he had made suitable disposition of his little force along the rest of the ridge, and he took personal charge at this point. Merideth and I were here, and we worked as neither of us had ever worked before or ever expect to work again, although Coogan occasionally cautioned us not to exhaust ourselves, as the real fight was yet to come.

The fire had not reached the ravine, but we had plenty of evidence that it was coming fast. In addition to the heat and the smoke, clouds of sparks were continually passing over us or descending upon us. Two of the most experienced fire fighters had the task of watching these sparks and seeing that they did not start a blaze at some unexpected point. One of them smothered an incipient fire that started in Coogan's clothing. The rest of us gave our attention to clearing the ravine, so far as possible, of everything that would carry fire.

Coogan himself became more and more anxious. "Why don't Palmer come?" he grumbled. "We ain't got a fair show without the pumps."

And indeed it seemed so. The roar of the advancing fire was awful, and the

sparks were falling more and more thickly. There was ever increasing danger that they would start a crown fire—that is, a fire in the treetops that cannot be easily reached.

Then Palmer came. Palmer, we discovered, was the chief ranger of the district, and the delay was occasioned by the fact that he brought a wagonload of supplies with him and was compelled to make a particularly long detour to get the wagon through. He had additional mattocks, axes and rakes, but, more important than this, he had hand-pumps that would throw a stream twenty or thirty feet and chemically prepared water for use in them.

Palmer needed no explanation of the situation; a glance told him everything it was necessary to know.

"Dan," he yelled, to make himself heard above the roar of the flames, "you hold this ravine! That's your job. I'll look after everything else."

That was a nice little job, too, but fortunately we were better equipped for it now. Palmer left pumps and water with us, and we were thus able to reach incipient blazes that had previously been difficult to handle.

Then began such a fight as I never expect to see again. It seemed as if the fire had a personality—a devilish personality and a devilish ingenuity in attacking us where we least expected it. It was a battle, calling for all the resourcefulness and strategy necessary to defeat a human enemy. The fire would fairly leap over us and begin to lick up the tops of trees on the other side of the ridge. A charge with handpumps would drive it back, but it would then come creeping through the brush in several different places at once. The gunnysack detachment would immediately rush in and beat it out with the sacks, or else the burning stuff would be raked into an isolated heap and left to burn itself out. And all the while the falling sparks and brands were threatening and starting new blazes. The roar was terrible and the heat so intense that it parched our faces and hands. Yet that little band held the ravine as Horatius held the bridge. No one hesitated; no one re-

laxed his vigilance for a single moment. Occasionally one or another of the party found his clothing afire, but the blaze was quickly smothered or beaten out, sometimes with bare hands.

Merideth worked manfully, ever ready to dash in where any other dared go and asking odds of no one. Once he glanced ruefully at his scorched clothing and asked if Uncle Sam would buy him a new suit. "And I rawther think," he added, "that I'll need a new skin as well, you know."

But we held the fire at the ridge. Time and time again we seemed to be beaten, but somehow we always managed to check the advance, and it became evident at last that it was dying down, was burning itself out at the barrier we had made. It was time. I was so exhausted that I could hardly move, and Merideth was in almost as bad shape. Even the rangers, accustomed to this sort of thing, showed signs of weariness, and there were many of them who could show signs of an unpleasantly close association with fire, too.

But we had stopped its advance—there could be no doubt about that—and the big fight had been made at the ravine. Palmer had had a long line to guard, and had had to rally his forces quickly at various different points to keep the fire from jumping the ridge, but the ravine was the one place where danger had threatened all the time. And we had won.

The fire was still burning, and seemed to be spreading slowly to the north, but it would be less difficult to check its advance in that direction, and Palmer was already assigning men to the task.

Coogan rested a moment, leaning on his rake. "We got it now," he announced. "We got it where we can hold it, boys." Unconsciously his eyes sought the spot that they had sought so anxiously and so often in the earlier stages of the fight. The smoke hanging over the intervening space made it difficult to determine just how far the fire had gone in that direction, but there was evidently something in what he saw that disturbed Coogan. "Looks like it's got Tooney's cabin," he exclaimed, dropping

his rake. "I got to see about that. The old fool would stick to the last minute. You don't need me here any more," he added apologetically, "and that there girl of Tooney's—"

"I'll go along, Dan," put in Jim Trent.

"No," said Coogan, "I don't need you, Jim. Two can't do no more than one in a case like this, so what's the use?"

We continued the fight at the ridge until it was evident that we had the situation thoroughly in hand, and then Palmer began detaching more men from our force and sending them to assist those who were already trying to keep the fire from spreading to the north. Finally he himself went to join them. Merideth and I were left with one or two others to watch the ridge and see that the fire did not get a fresh start there. We were quite satisfied with this arrangement. We had no overwhelming desire to get into the thick of the fight again immediately. Unaccustomed to this sort of strenuous and continuous labor, we were in sore need of a little rest. It was necessary to patrol the ridge, and there was an occasional spurt of flame to be met, but that seemed like luxurious ease after our labor during the preceding hours.

"D'ye know, old chap," remarked Merideth, as we entered upon our patrol duty, "I'm so jolly well cooked that I'd be ready to serve if you poured a bit of gravy over me."

I felt much the same way myself, but for the moment I was more interested in Coogan's mission than in my own discomfort. He would have to make a detour to reach the cabin, and it was not at all certain that he could reach it then. From our position on the ridge we could not be sure how far the fire had extended in that direction, but it looked as if it were already beyond the spot that we had learned to recognize as the location of Tooney's cabin.

So far as our patrol went we found things in a satisfactory condition, and the others made similar reports. It was occasionally necessary to beat out a small blaze, but there was no real fire

fighting, and as soon as all reports were in the ranger in charge released Merideth and myself and gave us directions that would enable us to get back to Coogan's cabin, where we had left our guns and camp equipment. Indeed, we could see the cabin against the skyline on the opposite ridge.

It was necessary to go some distance to either the north or the south before we could hope to cross the intervening valley, and we chose the north route because it would take us nearest to the Tooney cabin. The cabin, because of the tragic possibilities associated with it, had a great fascination for us.

Night had fallen when we started, but there was a full moon. When we finally decided that it was safe to attempt to descend the slope we were startled by a most extraordinary sight in the valley below. A part of this valley between the two ridges was clear of trees, and across this space we saw a strange figure toiling.

"By Jove!" Merideth exclaimed. "It's a man carrying another man on his back!"

"If it's a man doing the carrying," I returned, after a closer observation, "the man wears skirts."

Just then the one doing the carrying sank down on one knee and gently deposited the burden on the ground.

"Right, old chap!" cried Merideth. "It's a woman! Come on!"

He dashed off down the slope at a breakneck pace, I following as best I could.

Most of the time the trees shut off our view, but we got occasional glimpses of the two. Once we saw the woman kneeling beside the man and pillowing his head on her arm, and later we noted that she was preparing to resume her burden. We were much nearer then, could see more distinctly, and we involuntarily paused to see how she would solve the problem.

She did it in a masterful way. It was evident that he was able to help himself to some extent, and she first raised him to a sitting posture. Then she dropped on one knee with her back to him, drew his arms over her shoulders and rose

slowly to her feet. We could see that it called for prodigious effort, and she had to lean far forward to keep his feet from dragging on the ground, but she was equal to the task.

"It's Coogan!" Merideth cried. "It's Coogan and the girl! Ain't she a ripper, though? Come on!"

It was Coogan; there could be no doubt about that now. And it was a reasonable presumption that the girl who was carrying him was the one that he had sought to rescue. Merideth began to shout to her to wait for us, quite unmindful of the fact that she was too far away to hear us.

Staggering under such a burden, the girl's progress was slow, however, and we rapidly gained on her until at last she heard Merideth's shouts. Then she carefully put down her burden and waited for us to come up.

She was kneeling beside him with his head resting on her arm when we reached her. She was slightly above medium height, and we did not have to be told that she had unusual strength for one of her sex. Her feat in carrying Coogan so far was proof of that. She had about reached the limit of her endurance, however.

Under more favorable conditions I have no doubt she would have been considered handsome—handsome rather than pretty. Indeed we later discovered that she was. But now her face was blackened by smoke, her rough gown was torn and burned in several places, her hands were blistered, her hair was singed and her anxiety for Coogan was reflected in her eyes.

Coogan himself was barely conscious and quite helpless. He was badly burned, but his helplessness was principally due to the fact that he had wrenched one leg in trying to avoid a falling tree, had failed to escape it altogether, and had received a stunning blow on the head in consequence. Merideth, however, had some water left in his canteen, and this partly revived Coogan, although we could see that he was suffering excruciating pain.

"He came after me," explained the girl, while we were constructing a litter

for Coogan, "but I'd got out the other way. Dad wasn't home, and I didn't wait very long after the fire got comin' toward the cabin. There couldn't anybody get through where he tried it, but I guess he was crazy over thinkin' I was at the cabin. Anyhow, he tried to go in one way while I was pullin' out the other. Then I circled the fire, so's to get down to the valley, and that's how I came on Dan. He'd found he couldn't get through there, I guess, and was tryin' to get out and go at it somewheres else. He was blind and staggerin' when I saw him; he didn't know quite what he was doin', but he was comin' out all right, and he was jest clear of the fire when the fallin' tree got him. Then I ran in and pulled him out. I was sort of lookin' for him anyhow, to tell him I was safe, for I knew jest what kind of fool he'd be if he thought I was still at the cabin."

"D'ye know," remarked Merideth, "I cawn't quite make out which of you I admire most. But where were you going?"

"To Dan's cabin," she replied. "That's the nearest place where I could find a telephone and send for help."

"You'd have been jolly well played out before you got there," asserted Merideth.

"But I'd have got there," she said quietly, "or there'd have been two dead on the trail."

"Fawncy now!" commented Merideth, measuring with his eyes the distance she had traversed with her burden and then the distance to Coogan's cabin. "Fawncy a woman like that! They don't make 'em many places, old chap."

It was a comparatively easy matter to get Coogan to his cabin, although he suffered intensely during the journey. Once there a telephone call was sent for help, and the girl showed her expertness in attending to Coogan's injuries.

The following day a man arrived with a cart and a burro, to take Coogan to a place where he could receive medical and surgical attention. He had started immediately upon receipt of our telephone message, had traveled most of the night and was in need of rest and sleep, but when he found how serious the situation

was he expressed his readiness to begin the return journey at once.

As a matter of fact, his sympathy was probably aroused by the fact that the girl was in even worse condition. She had been painfully burned, had been under a terrible mental and physical strain and had spent practically all her time since reaching the cabin in ministering to Coogan's wants.

Nevertheless, she wished to start back at once. Merideth and I agreed to remain and cover that station as best we could until a ranger could be sent to relieve us. This was of unusual importance at this time, for there is especial danger of a fire lately subdued getting a fresh start in some unexpected place.

Merideth's actions now savored somewhat of mystery. He called the new man aside and had quite a long conference with him. I even thought I saw some money passed. Then he took the girl aside and had a talk with her. Her

gestures indicated occasional expostulation, but Merideth talked on, and she finally came with him to where Coogan and I were waiting. Merideth did the talking.

"I'm no bally Cupid, old chap," he said to Coogan, "but why don't you speak up?"

"Wh-what!" faltered Coogan.

"Speak up," advised Merideth. "Tell her! She don't really have to be told, because a girl always knows, but she jolly well likes to have a man tell her. I cawn't do it all, you know. I've tried, but it won't do."

"So have I tried," returned Coogan with a whimsical smile, "but I was afraid—"

"That's why you don't deserve your luck, old chap," interrupted Merideth.

Coogan studied Merideth's face a moment, and then turned to the girl and held out his bandaged arms. She dropped on her knees beside him, and we looked the other way.



JOY BRINGERS

By Aldis Dunbar

WHAT reck the rivers of the parching sand?
Onward they rush, all eager for the sea,
Nor count their drops that sparkle carelessly,
Yet give new vigor to the thirsty land!



"MAY I ask you who lives here?"
"Certainly!"
"Well, who is it?"
"I don't know."



AN argument with a woman is often opened by mistake.

THE STARS AND EVE

By Howard Markle Hoke

PROFESSOR PHINEAS PRINCE was used to seeing stars—not because, being absent-minded, he often bumped his head or frequently attended the theater, but because he was an astronomer. He knew the celestial addresses of the orbs far better than those of his earthly associates. With him mathematical calculation was a primary diversion. Auction bridge was a maze of perplexities. A quintillion miles or two was a trifling thumb-span. He could compute the parallax of a heavenly body with one hand and break a soft boiled egg with the other.

Nevertheless, he was human. He objected strenuously to this, but to no purpose. He simply had to be human, because he had the regulation earthly contacts. He walked like other mortals, and that necessitated at least two contacts. Also mundane fatigue sent him to bed—producing a longitudinal contact.

Now earthly contacts make work. It's a law of this old workaday world. For instance, walking inevitably brings on shoe blacking, because it's a dusty ball, to say the least. Someone had to black the Professor's shoes. And someone had to make his bed. In addition, an astronomer gets hungry the same as other people. He can't eat curds out of the Milky Way or order a dozen asteroids on the half-shell or make frankfurters out of the Dog Star. He must consume beef and potatoes and cabbage and sardines and onions and ice cream to keep his impalpable essence from floating into the whithersoever. Therefore, someone had to peel the potatoes, cook the beef and churn the ice cream for the Professor.

So the same force that scattered the stars like daisies on the sable field of night—this theme demands the most poetic treatment—created a being with an irrepressible fondness for the work growing out of earthly contacts. It is recorded that this being was made of a rib. Incidentally, it may be remarked that this is proved by her inherent passion for ribbons. However she came, man, who was designed to have his mind fixed upon politics and business and science and baseball and penny ante and quoits, would have been a wretchedly hungry and slovenly lump of cosmic dust if this being hadn't been sent down to look after his creature comforts. What an inhospitable place the earth would have been without her! Lots of things grow on it, but few of them are fit to eat without being cooked. That is where She comes in as a ministering angel. Inspiration fairly kindles at the thought.

Now it happens also that in the sub-lunary scheme money was invented. With cash even an astronomer can have his shoes polished, his bed made, his bacon fried, his pantaloons creased and his socks darned, but all these services are rendered merely according to the pay—generally as little as possible for the pay.

These grudging services would have made the earth a great deal more earthly—or unearthly—had it not been for a silent, unobtrusive, mysterious, powerful force. Electricity is an incompetent compared with it. It is the very antipodes of money. By means of it this being, this Eve, will become so fond of one particular Adam that she will almost roast herself over the kitchen

range, break her back with a broom, vitalize a sewing machine—a thousand and one strenuosities—and all without the receipt of an equivalent in coin of the realm. One pet name from Adam will be worth more to her than a cheque in many figures.

The real wonder, though, is the reciprocity of it. On his side, Adam will puzzle his brains over politics and government and business and checkers and pinochle and his thousand and one other efficiencies so that Eve may have the wherewithal to devote herself to her tasks. He performs Herculean stunts simply to provide raw material for the kitchen range.

So the Professor awoke to the fact that he was a lonely, down-at-the-heel, hole-in-the-sock sort of citizen, in spite of his astronomical lore. He was getting nothing but dollar service—about sixty-nine cents' worth of unwilling service for his dollar. He needed heart service, which usually runs to par and often a long way beyond. Consequently he lowered his gaze from the constellations above to the constellations of Eves.

Accustomed to staring Venus straight in the face, he was sheepishly diffident before one of the earthly kind. He discovered that these earthly—yet heavenly—bodies do not move in fixed orbits; in fact, that they are so eccentric that every known mathematical process fails to reach the answer. There is no equation for any of them. But one

evening one orb blazed forth from the field of femininity. Her radiance filled the Professor's soul with devotion. Then he thrilled when he discovered that she was a fixed star. He made careful estimates and deductions and computations—and threw them all aside as useless; then, on an ambrosial evening, she was his by right of discovery, and consented to be known ever afterward by his name.

Now the Professor is the chipperest astronomer who ever squinted through a lens. He is complete, because he has combined the earthly with the celestial. His whole-socked feet are now planted on an earth of worthwhileness. Now and then, sweeping through space, there rises to him the aroma of frying ham or calf's liver, the whir of the ice cream churn or the fragrance of posies on a snowy dinner table; and he knows that She is serenely and lovingly house-keeping for him.

But that isn't all. He has discovered a great truth—that the earth is itself a star, which he had shamelessly overlooked among the thousands of stars; and that, among all those thousands, his most powerful glass has failed to find a trace of an Eden from which came the Eve that makes the old earth the comfiest orb in the orbit business.

All of which proves that men may easily have their heads among the stars and be crushing treasures under their heels.



“DIDN'T they get married?”
“No; they scuttled the courtship.”



IF women don't mention their age—time will tell.



IT'S the man with a vaulting ambition who should look before he leaps.

THE MARRIAGE LEASE

By Hobart Lee

CHARACTERS

THE HUSBAND (*aged thirty-five years*)

THE WIFE (*aged thirty years*)

THE COUNSELOR (*aged sixty years*)

CLAUSE 5 FROM THE MARRIAGE LEASE:

. . . This marriage contract may be dissolved at the expiration of seven years, provided notice in writing is served by either party. In the event of both parties failing to signify dissatisfaction, this contract automatically continues in effect for another period of seven years. . . .

PLACE: *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

TIME: *Some years hence.*

SCENE—*A well furnished library. There is a large library table upon which is shown a vase of fresh flowers. A telephone rests on a desk at one side. Against the opposite wall stands a sideboard. A coat tree stands in one corner; a big clock hangs on the wall. French windows open off upon a veranda, and there are doors at the right and left. A dressing jacket hangs on the back of a chair and a pair of slippers are seen on the floor beside a hassock. The whole room has an air of tidy disuse, not having been occupied for six months. The curtain rises on an empty stage.*

HUSBAND (*entering furtively through the French window. He is attired in street clothes and carries a suit case. He gazes about the room carefully studying everything. His eyes fall upon the flowers, the dressing jacket and the slippers. For a moment he shows concern, but with a shrug of his shoulders casts it off, goes to the telephone, looks at his watch and picks up the receiver.*)

Hellol! Give me 6or Rector. . . . I want to speak with Mr. Bolt. . . . What? No; the elder Mr. Bolt. . . . Yes, this is Mr. Bland. . . . He's on his way to my house? Thank you.

(*He hangs up the receiver and looks at his watch again. He stands at the table, lights a cigarette and starts for the sideboard, then stops and hangs up the dressing*

jacket and with his foot pushes the slippers under the desk. After reflecting a moment, he goes to the window, which he opens cautiously and looks out. He sees someone approaching and whistles softly. The COUNSELOR, an elderly man, smooth shaven and with white hair, appears outside and enters. He takes the proffered hand of the HUSBAND, who closes the window softly and takes the lawyer's hat.)

HUSBAND

Pardon this window welcome, Judge, but the fact is I prefer that no one should know you're here. You got my telegram?

COUNSELOR

Yes. I'm on time?

HUSBAND

To the minute. I suppose you know what it's all about. Sit down.
(*He waves him to a chair.*)

COUNSELOR

Well, hardly. I assumed, from the fact that you decided to return to New York suddenly after an absence of six months, that it must be quite important.

HUSBAND

It's critical.

COUNSELOR

Business?

HUSBAND

No. Family.

COUNSELOR

So?

HUSBAND

Listen. It won't take a minute to explain everything. Seven years ago I was married under the Marriage Lease Law. Do you get me?

COUNSELOR

Perfectly.

HUSBAND

Will you have something to drink?

COUNSELOR

Never touch it, my son.

HUSBAND

Oh, very well. You'll excuse me?

COUNSELOR

Certainly.

HUSBAND (*at the sideboard*)

Now just keep your seat and I'll give you the facts. In the first place, there's nothing whatever the matter with the lady who is at present my wife. Do you get that?

COUNSELOR

Assuredly.

HUSBAND

She's an ace in every way, and as for looks, she's got every woman in the

street stung to a hardly perceptible whisper. Are you listening?

COUNSELOR (*nodding*)

I am.

HUSBAND

When we cut into this experimental marriage game it looked like a long run for the big matrimonial sweepstakes. But it's slowed down, and now it's nothing but an endurance race. Are you on?

COUNSELOR

Quite.

HUSBAND

I've been away for the last six months trying to dope it out so as not to make any stall plays, and now my mind's made up. I'm going to leave the lady this house and property—we'll attend to the details later—and then close out this marriage lease. (*He puffs his cigarette and looks steadily at the Judge.*) After which I'll beat it. See?

COUNSELOR

This is serious. Let's think about it.

HUSBAND

Think about nothing! I've been doing nothing but think for the last six months, and I'm through. It's all off, Judge. She doesn't understand me.

COUNSELOR

Does your wife know?

HUSBAND

Not a hint. I've been away for six months, you know. I've been in South America on business. I wrote her several letters, and one of hers caught up with me at Aspinwall. (*He pauses a moment.*) But I didn't open it. I made up my mind to blow the game for keeps, and that's what I'm back here for. Seven years ago today at four o'clock we were married. Now if you'll look at the clock, Judge, you'll see that I've got about twenty minutes to jump overboard in the sea of human existence before all the life preservers are gone.

COUNSELOR

And let the woman and children take care of themselves!

HUSBAND (*excitedly*)

That's the whole trouble, Judge. I haven't any children. You've hit the shingle nail of my troubles with a sledge hammer. (*Crosses and strikes a pose.*) I want to be a father. Look me over, Judge. Give a good glance. (*He throws out his chest and turns around to be inspected.*) How do I size up? I know I'm not exactly a Sandow or an Apollo Belvedere, but I'm a man.

COUNSELOR

Well, yes; and rather a fine specimen I should say.

HUSBAND

There you are. And what have I to show for it? Nothing. Married seven years, and childless. Every man should be a father—that is, every married man.

COUNSELOR

Don't be impatient.

HUSBAND (*vehemently*)

Impatient! I'm not. But the way I've framed up my marriage is a joke. Everybody in this part of Brooklyn has a family—except me. Why, the runt living next door isn't over five feet high, and he's got six kids; and, what's more to the point, he's been married only five years.

COUNSELOR

What!

HUSBAND

Two sets of twins. And he got 'em all counted in the last census. What do you know about that?

COUNSELOR

And so you want to terminate your marriage contract?

HUSBAND

You bet. Here it is. (*He takes a paper from a drawer in the desk.*) Look it over.

COUNSELOR

I am already familiar with this form of contract.

HUSBAND (*sticking his hands in his trousers pockets and striding up and down*)

This wedded bliss stuff is all right, when you can prove that you're really wedded. But when you've been sticking around the old fireside for seven years and there isn't a child's voice to break the silence— As I said before, Judge, the wedding bells have got mufflers on. Now I ask you—is it or isn't it a farce?

COUNSELOR

Possibly. It all depends upon one's point of view.

HUSBAND

Does it? I answer: It doesn't. Is it natural? *It is not.* Prove it? Listen to me and I'll show you what it means to be a father. (*He crosses in front of the other, and bending over begins to count upon his fingers.*) One pair of jack-rabbits—you hear me, one—pair—of—jackrabbits—in one year will multiply into two hundred and sixty jackrabbits.

COUNSELOR (*astonished*)

You don't mean it!

HUSBAND

You bet your life I mean it. Write to the Department of Agriculture and find out for yourself. Ask 'em how many eggs a salmon can lay. Ninety thousand. Did you hear those awful figures—ninety thousand? Yes, sir. And at least thirty thousand of them will hatch.

COUNSELOR

Appalling, isn't it?

HUSBAND

Even a rattlesnake has fifteen children at a time. Just let those figures sink into you.

COUNSELOR

The comparison is hardly fair.

HUSBAND (*indignantly*)

Why isn't it fair? The paternal instinct is strong in every living thing. Has a grasshopper or a house rat or a jackrabbit or the canned salmon supply got it on me for longing? You know,

Judge, I'm a human being with a heart and a soul. I can express my thoughts in words. I can reason. I've got a mind and intelligence. I'm no reptile or fish or varmint. (*He strikes his breast.*) I'm a M-A-N.

COUNSELOR

I quite appreciate your feelings. It is unfortunate that circumstances—

HUSBAND

And if you want more statistics on birthrates, take it from me that a single housefly will lay fifty thousand eggs during her lifetime. And here am I, a full grown specimen of the human species—and childless.

COUNSELOR (*grimly*)

That's preferable to being a housefly.

HUSBAND

Don't joke, Judge. My heart, my home are empty. Will you look that contract over now?

COUNSELOR

I'm ready whenever you are.

HUSBAND

Well, then, let's get to it.

COUNSELOR (*looking over the papers*)

Umph! Too bad.

HUSBAND (*excitedly*)

We can bust it, can't we, Judge?

COUNSELOR

I suppose you know that the notice to vacate should be in your handwriting. And you must serve it in person.

HUSBAND

No, I didn't. Can't *you* attend to the business?

COUNSELOR

Not according to the contract. See, it says distinctly (*He reads*): "In the handwriting of one of the contracting parties, and served in person."

HUSBAND

All right. Here goes. Tell me what I am to write and I'll put it down.

(*He takes up pen and paper.*)

COUNSELOR (*dictating*)

"I, Thomas Bland, hereby notify Clara Bland that I desire to terminate the marriage lease entered into by myself and the said Clara Bland on the date of—"

(*The telephone bell rings.*)

HUSBAND (*taking up the receiver*)

Hello, what is it? . . . Yes, this is Bland. . . . Yes, he's here. (*He hands the instrument to the COUNSELOR.*) It's for you. We haven't much time, Judge.

COUNSELOR (*talking into the telephone*)

Go ahead. Yes—yes, I hear you. What's the name—the full name? (*He looks at the HUSBAND and points to a pencil on the desk, which the latter hands to him.*) Go ahead. (*He writes on a pad.*) Clara Rhodes. Glad you called me. Good-bye. (*He hangs up the receiver.*)

HUSBAND (*looking at the COUNSELOR in alarm*)

What's the matter? Is she trying to beat us to it?

COUNSELOR

What do you mean?

HUSBAND

Why, Rhoads is my wife's maiden name.

COUNSELOR

You don't say so!

HUSBAND

Sure it is.

COUNSELOR

This is fortunate.

HUSBAND (*picks up his glass from the sideboard*)

What's the answer?

COUNSELOR

She has fallen heir to half a million dollars.

HUSBAND (*returns the glass*)
The devil you say! Who left it to her?

COUNSELOR
Her Uncle Henry, who died in Nevada.

HUSBAND
I never knew she had an uncle. Well, here's to him! (*He lifts his glass again.*)

COUNSELOR
I beg pardon. Just a moment. (*He stays the HUSBAND'S arm.*) Hadn't you better reconsider?

HUSBAND (*doggedly*)
Well—maybe I had. She isn't such a bad sort. Oh, I don't know. You see, Judge—(*With a touch of suspicion*) Say, how do I know you aren't trying to kid me? That half a million stunt listens good, but how does it look?

COUNSELOR
Very promising, I should say.

HUSBAND (*reflecting*)
Look here, Judge; as a lawyer, what would you advise me to do? Of course I want to be fair. That's the kind of a man I am. I wouldn't harm a hair of my wife's head.

COUNSELOR (*observing the trend of events*)
Nor her feelings.

HUSBAND
Not in a million years. Didn't I say she was all right? And she is. Judge, she's a grand little woman. They don't make 'em any better. Good-looking woman, ain't she?

COUNSELOR
I know of none more attractive.

HUSBAND
She always was a beauty. I wonder if I haven't been a little coarse about the separation? It's a hard thing to separate suddenly from a pal after seven years of loving affection. It is, isn't it, Judge? How long have you been married? There's nothing like it, is there?

COUNSELOR
Nothing, my boy, nothing! By the way, you know my eldest son?

HUSBAND
Sure I know him.

COUNSELOR
Well, he wasn't born until ten years after my marriage to his mother.

HUSBAND
On the level?

COUNSELOR
We were married in 1880. Joseph was born in 1890. (*Both men look at each other.*) Fine boy, isn't he?

HUSBAND
He's a wonder. I wish he was my son.

COUNSELOR
Well?

HUSBAND
Ten years! Is that right?

COUNSELOR
Lacking four months.

HUSBAND (*picking up the written page. He scans it, looks at the clock and slowly tears the document into four pieces, which he throws into wastebasket.*)

Perhaps I'd better wait. (*The COUNSELOR offers his hand and the men shake warmly.*) She is a peach, Judge. Look at that picture of her. (*He points to a photograph on the desk.*) Good-shaped head. Fine eyes. (*To the picture.*) Clara, you're a one hundred per cent crackerjack, and me for you. (*To the COUNSELOR*) If we had any children, Judge, which of us would they be more likely to resemble? (*He throws out his chest and poses again.*) You know, when it comes to form, I'm not such a lemon myself. Feel the arm. (*He offers his arm to the other, who clasps it at the biceps.*)

COUNSELOR
Marvelous!

HUSBAND
Well, what'll we do next?

COUNSELOR

I think perhaps I shall be going. You will want to see your wife.

HUSBAND

Hadn't you better stick around and—

COUNSELOR

But this is not the proper time for me to be here—now that you have decided.

HUSBAND

Well, how about that legacy and the late lamented uncle in Nevada? There's some class to him, too. You sit down, and I'll go and get my wife. I'm crazy to see her. (*Confidentially.*) And say, I've decided to pass up the highballs. (*He goes to the sideboard and puts the bottle in the locker, shutting the door with finality.*) Just like that! Never again! (*He starts to leave the room, but stops at the door and scratches his head.*) How about phoning your office once more to see if that Uncle Henry is on the level?

COUNSELOR

I will if you insist. (*He goes to the desk and picks up the telephone.*)

(*The WIFE enters. She is dressed in negligée and has a workbasket in her arms. When she sees her husband and the other man she is greatly confused and is on the point of backing out. The COUNSELOR bows and the HUSBAND crosses quickly to her.*)

WIFE

Oh, Tom!

HUSBAND (*taking her in his arms*)
Clara!
(*They embrace.*)

WIFE

How long have you been home? Why didn't you let me know? It seems an age since—

HUSBAND

Here she is, Judge. Doesn't she look fine? Say, girl, I wanted to surprise you, and just as I was coming up the street along strolls the Judge. He's got some good news for you. Tell her, Judge.

WIFE

Good or bad news, Judge Bolt is welcome. Please sit down, Judge, and tell me of it.

HUSBAND (*feigning indifference*)

Tell her about it, Judge. Now's as good as any time. Women like to hear about such things. They all enjoy trifles.

COUNSELOR

Wouldn't you rather have me call again? Your husband's just home from a long absence—

HUSBAND

Oh, go on—tell her.

WIFE

Yes, do.

HUSBAND

Put it over, Judge. Get busy. Don't you know that women are anxious by nature? Start something.

WIFE (*appealingly*)

What is it, Judge?

COUNSELOR (*wiping his glasses*)

Well, my dear woman, our law firm has today received advices that a certain Clara Rhodes—

WIFE (*quickly*)

Yes. That was my maiden name.

COUNSELOR

—has been left the sum of half a million dollars.

WIFE (*anxiously*)

By whom?

HUSBAND

By an Uncle Henry.

WIFE (*thoughtfully*)

Uncle Henry!

COUNSELOR

He died recently in Nevada.

HUSBAND

Probably the black sheep of your father's family. They always die rich

and leave a barrel of money to the respectable but poor relatives.

COUNSELOR

I congratulate you both. Such a sum of money will make you independent.

HUSBAND

That'll do, Judge. We don't care a whoop about money, so long as we have each other. How about it, girl? Eh, Judge? Of course we'd like to have some details about this Uncle Henry Goodplayer, and when you get back to your office I wish you'd 'phone us a little new dope on the proposition. (*Taking his wife in his arms*) Loving hearts are better than gold. And my middle name is devotion. (*To the COUNSELOR*) If you must go—

COUNSELOR

By all means. As soon as I get further information on the subject of your legacy, Mrs. Bland, I will communicate with you.

WIFE

Of course I'm anxious to know all about it.

HUSBAND

Hadn't we better go down to your office with you now?

WIFE (*cooly*)

Tom, I want you with me a little while.

HUSBAND (*hurriedly*)

All right, sweetheart. I thought perhaps you were anxious to know more about it. So far as I'm concerned, money cuts no ice. All I want is love, love, love! Just love and you. (*He kisses her.*) The Judge and I were talking about you just as you came in. Weren't we, Judge?

COUNSELOR

Well, young people, I'm off. Good-bye; and may your wealth bring you happiness.

WIFE

Good afternoon, Judge Bolt.

HUSBAND

Good-bye, Counselor. I'm glad you dropped in.

COUNSELOR (*looking at the clock and winking slyly at the HUSBAND*)

How time flies! It's five minutes to four. Moments are precious nowadays.

HUSBAND

You bet they are.

(*The COUNSELOR goes out through the French window.*)

WIFE (*astonished*)

Why did he leave through the window?

HUSBAND

Don't you know about Judge Bolt's failing?

WIFE

No.

HUSBAND (*lighting a cigarette and taking plenty of time to think*)

He's absent-minded. (*He seats himself at the table.*) But never mind, dear. He'll find Uncle Henry for you.

WIFE

Then he will be a marvel if he does.

HUSBAND (*casually*)

How so?

WIFE

Because I haven't any Uncle Henry.

HUSBAND

You haven't!

WIFE

Father had no brothers, and mother was one of a family of three sisters. (*She crosses behind her HUSBAND to set her workbasket on the small table. The HUSBAND begins to look worried.*) So how could I have had an uncle? There's some mistake.

HUSBAND (*his chin in his left hand*)

There is a whole flock of mistakes. (*He looks at the clock again and dives down into the waste paper basket and fishes up the four fragments of the written notice of separation. The telephone rings again.*)

WIFE

Who's that?

HUSBAND

I don't know. Answer it. I'm busy. *(He begins to copy the notice of separation, writing furiously, looking anxiously at the clock.)*

WIFE *(at the telephone)*

Yes, this is Mr. Bland's house. No, Judge Bolt just left a moment ago. . . . Yes, I'm Mrs. Bland. . . . No, my maiden name is spelled "R-h-o-a-d-s," not "R-h-o-d-e-s." *(The HUSBAND looks disgusted and hastens his writing.)* It's a mistake? I thought so. Some other Rhodes. There goes a fortune! *(She sets the telephone on the desk and looks at her HUSBAND.)*

HUSBAND *(without looking up from his writing)*

All roads lead to ruin.

WIFE

Quite a startling wedding anniversary, isn't it, dear? *(She goes to the work-basket.)*

HUSBAND *(writing madly)*

They're all startling. Don't bother me; I'm busy.

WIFE *(picking out something from the basket)*

But there are compensations for everything. *(She goes to the opposite side of the desk and seats herself while she spreads something before her.)* Tom!

HUSBAND

Yes. *(He continues to write.)*

WIFE

Does it seem to you as though we had been married eight years?

HUSBAND *(dropping the pen, rising and leaning across the desk)*

Eight! You don't mean eight!

WIFE *(surprised)*

Yes. Why not? We were married in June, 1911, and this is 1919—June twenty-third. *(The HUSBAND begins to count on his fingers, still looking at the clock.)* Isn't it eight, Tom?

HUSBAND *(going to the sideboard and pouring out a tumbler of whiskey)*

It's eight! I thought it was seven. *(The telephone rings again. The HUSBAND goes to the desk, takes down the receiver and sets it end up on the desk.)* Don't monkey with that 'phone any more. It trimmed us out of half a million on the last call. The next thing we'll hear is that we owe that much. *(He seats himself and looks across at the garment the WIFE has spread on the desk. An expression of great concern comes into his face.)* What's that, Clara?

WIFE *(confused)*

Don't you know, Tom?

HUSBAND

No. It's a new one on me. *(He begins slowly to gather the torn and newly written separation notices, and slowly destroys them below the level of the desk. All the while a new and softer expression comes into his eyes.)* Who's it for?

WIFE

Come over here and I'll whisper something to you. It's a great secret.

HUSBAND

Wait a minute. *(He rises and goes back to the sideboard with the drink. He pours it back in the bottle and returns the bottle to the locker after pounding the cork in.)*

WIFE

What are you doing, Tom?

HUSBAND

Taking the pledge. Passing up the booze. *(He comes to her side and bends over to her. She pulls his head down and whispers something. A broad grin comes over his features. The wife holds up a child's garment and then hides her head behind his hands which she clutches to her.)* Clara! *(His voice is thick and emotional.)* Clara! Look at me!

WIFE *(rising and looking tenderly into his face)*

My husband!

HUSBAND

I love you! I love you! (*He kisses her twice, and points to the garment.*) I love you better than all else in the world. But isn't that sort of sudden?

WIFE (*bashfully, hiding her head*)
Oh, I don't know. Eight years.

HUSBAND

And does it seem like eight years to you? (*He lifts her face by the chin.*)

WIFE

No, Tom; they are to me as eight golden hours.

HUSBAND

You set something ringing in my heart like a chime of bells.

WIFE

And aren't—you sorry about—Uncle

Henry? Don't you want me to be an heiress?

HUSBAND

Not when I'm to receive a greater legacy from you. We will have an heir of our own. Wait a minute. I've got a good joke on Judge Bolt. (*He goes to the desk and takes up the telephone receiver, seats himself in the chair and draws his WIFE caressingly down on his knee.*)

Hello. Six—O—one Rector. . . . Is that Judge Bolt's office? . . . I want his secretary. . . . Oh, you are! Well, when he comes in please give him Mr. Thomas Bland's compliments and say for me that I've got him beat by two years. . . . Yes, that's all. . . . You bet he'll understand!

(HUSBAND and WIFE embrace in a tender caress.)

CURTAIN.



BOREDOM

By Harry Kemp

I HATE the changing-changeless moon,
The iteration of the sun,
The regularity of noon
And systems that like clockwork run;

And I would leap and clap for joy
If morn for once would enter late
Day's Empire, like a careless boy,
And make expectant twilight wait;

And I would dance for joy and shout
If the sun bartered gold for green,
Or if the moon should swing about
The silver side I've never seen.



A WOMAN may smile and smile and not be one bit pleased.

NO SONG OF MINE

By W. Osborne

NO song of mine will ever hint the measure
Of all the love my fond heart beareth thee;
But when at eve the sunbeam's molten treasure
Gleams gold on ocean murmuring peacefully,
When swoon the seas in purple, star-kissed slumbers
And fairy moonlight casts a gracious spell,
Some winsome wind in passionate trancing numbers
May whisper all I have no words to tell.

And when the dawn unfolds its wild rose glory,
Or in still splendor of the shimmering noon,
It may be you will hear that haunting story
Where soft, slow waters weave a whisp'ring croon.
It may be from the looms of joy and sorrow
Fair hands of fancy will in beauty ray
The dull dream web of *that*, our somber morrow,
With golden threads of *this*—our yesterday.



“CAN a married man call his soul his own?”
“Yes, if he only mentions it to himself.”



RANDALL—It's love that makes the world go round, Miss Ida.
IDA—Are you sure it isn't a cocktail, Mr. Randall?



WHETHER we are ambitious or foolish depends altogether on whether we
succeed or not.

L'EX-VOTO

Par Henri de Régnier

C'EST ne fut pas sans une certaine surprise que la petite ville de Langon-les-Vignes apprit que M. de la Chalais recherchait en mariage Mlle. Alice de Vernal.

La raison de cet étonnement provenait tout d'abord de ce que M. de la Chalais n'avait rien de particulièrement propre à faire un mari agréable. La quarantaine, en effet, ne lui avait épargné ni la calvitie, ni les rides, ni la goutte, pas plus qu'elle n'avait amélioré son caractère, de tout temps bougon et tracassier. Aussi, parut-il assez singulier qu'une personne de l'âge et de la figure de Mlle. de Vernal pût songer à lier sa vie à celle d'un pareil époux, d'autant que Mlle. de Vernal passait pour ne pas être tout à fait indifférente aux attentions répétées du jeune et fringant M. de Gerville, qui était considéré à Langon-les-Vignes comme la fleur des pois de la localité.

Malheureusement, M. de Gerville, s'il avait pour lui sa jolie tournure et sa taille bien prise, ne possédait guère d'autre bien, ce qui inclinait fort les parents de Mlle. de Vernal à préférer aux grâces indéniables de M. de Gerville les qualités d'ordre matériel qui rendaient à leurs yeux M. de la Chalais un gendre infiniment plus avantageux. Leur opinion à ce sujet se traduisait auprès de leur fille par des instances destinées à lui faire partager leur point de vue et à la résoudre à un choix auquel son cœur devait se prêter à défaut de sa raison. Néanmoins, Mlle. de Vernal hésitait à prendre une décision qui lui coûtait, et le débat eût traîné en longueur sans un événement qui en précipita brusquement la solution.

Ce fut à une fête chez la comtesse de

Laurin que ledit événement se produisit. Mme de Laurin réunissait pour une "sauterie" les amies de sa fille Etienne. Comme on était dans la belle saison, le jardin avait été illuminé de lanternes de couleur. Durant toute la soirée, M. de Gerville s'était montré ostensiblement assidu auprès de Mlle. de Vernal, qui semblait préférer ces attentions aux empressements rébarbatifs de M. de la Chalais. Elle prouva, d'ailleurs, son sentiment à cet égard, en s'égarant avec M. de Gerville dans les détours d'un bosquet, au sortir duquel les deux amoureux se virent nez à nez avec l'irascible M. de la Chalais. Cette rencontre eut pour suites que la soirée ne s'acheva pas sans que M. de la Chalais ne trouvât l'occasion, sous un prétexte futile, de se prendre de querelle avec M. de Gerville, qui, le lendemain matin, reçut, à son réveil, la visite des témoins de son rival.

M. de Gerville n'était pas homme à se dérober à une pareille ambassade. Il tirait du pistolet comme un ange, et la provocation de M. de la Chalais lui donnait le choix des armes. M. de la Chalais fut rapporté chez lui avec une balle dans le genou, et si malencontreuse que les médecins jugèrent nécessaire l'amputation du membre si dextrement fracassé.

Quand on sut, à Langon-les-Vignes, que M. de la Chalais serait désormais infirme, les gens bien informés qui, en province, se font fort de n'ignorer rien des sentiments du prochain, même dans ce qu'ils ont de plus intime, déclarèrent que le mariage déjà incertain de M. de la Chalais et de Mlle. de Vernal en devenait des plus aventureux; mais leurs pronostics furent bientôt démentis, car l'on

ne tarda pas à apprendre que Mlle. de Vernal venait d'annoncer à ses parents qu'elle n'aurait jamais d'autre époux que M. de la Chalais, ce dont M. et Mme de Vernal se récriaient fort. Mais, de même que Mlle. de Vernal ne tenait auparavant guère compte de leurs instances, elle ne voulait à présent rien entendre de leurs objections. Il est vrai qu'elle avait pour motif secret à sa conduite de n'avoir pas été, par ses coquetteries avec M. de Gerville, étrangère à ce qui était arrivé à M. de la Chalais, et qu'elle voulait, en quelque sorte réparer ainsi le dommage qu'elle avait causé. Si bien qu'un beau midi, quelques mois après, toute la société de Langon-les-Vignes se réunissait à l'église pour y voir entrer Mlle. de Vernal en blanc costume de mariée, et pour l'en voir ressortir, au bras de M. de la Chalais, dont la jambe de bois sonnait sur les dalles plus rudement que la hallebarde du suisse!

Tout autre que M. de la Chalais se fût attendri d'un procédé si noble, si généreux et si délicat, mais M. de la Chalais ne tombait point dans ces sensibleries. La pauvre Alice de Vernal s'en aperçut assez vite, et elle découvrit bientôt que le caractère de son mari n'était pas de ceux qui se laissent aller à la reconnaissance et aux autres billevesées de même espèce. Non seulement M. de la Chalais se montra en ménage ce qu'il était partout, c'est-à-dire bougon et tracassier, mais il joignit à ces façons ordinaires celles d'un véritable tyran domestique.

Mais enfin, les adversités conjugales de Mme de la Chalais touchaient à leur fin. Le moment arriva où M. de la Chalais cessa ses moulinets et où la maison qui avait pendant vingt ans retenti de ses bourrades, de ses colères et du fracas de son pilon, demeura enfin silencieuse. M. de la Chalais était mort et bien mort; mais, malgré la certitude où elle était de sa délivrance, la pauvre Mme de la Chalais n'en pouvait croire ses yeux et ses oreilles.

Il lui semblait à chaque instant que le tyran de sa jeunesse allait se relever de sa couche, et c'est en vain qu'elle consi-

dérait la redoutable jambe de bois désormais inoffensive, qui reposait dans un coin de la chambre mortuaire. Quoi, elle ne l'entendrait plus frapper le parquet ou heurter aux marches de l'escalier! Cela passait son imagination.

Son amie, Etiennette de Laurin, devenue Mme de Gerville, et que depuis ce mariage elle n'avait naturellement plus revue, la surprit en cette contemplation et en ces pensées. A la nouvelle de la mort de M. de la Chalais, Etiennette de Laurin était accourue auprès d'Alice de Vernal. Les deux femmes tombèrent aux bras l'une de l'autre. Soudain, Mme de la Chalais poussa un cri d'épouvante. A la vue de ces épanchements, la jambe de bois avait dégringolé sur le plancher avec un bruit formidable, comme si M. de la Chalais, tout mort qu'il fût, eût voulu, une dernière fois encore, faire le bourru et le tyran. Mais Etiennette de Gerville n'était pas femme à se laisser décontenancer, même par des manifestations d'outrage. Aussi lorsqu'elle sortit de chez Mme de la Chalais, après que cette dernière se fut remise de l'évanouissement que lui avait causé la terreur de cette algarade posthume, Mme de Gerville emportait-elle sous son manteau la jambe de bois de feu M. de la Chalais, qui dut s'en aller dans la tombe privé de cet accessoire ligneux.

"Faute de quoi, disait plus tard, en riant, Mme de Gerville, ce vieux forban eût été fort capable de s'en servir pour simuler le fantôme et pour venir tourmenter sa malheureuse veuve, qui méritait de goûter un repos bien gagné. Mais comme je ne savais trop que faire de ce trophée, je pris le parti de le suspendre en ex-voto dans la petite chapelle de Saint-Julien, où, depuis lors, il se balance à la voûte, encore tout furieux du bon tour que je lui ai joué."

Telle fut l'histoire que me raconta un jour la vieille Mme de Gerville. Elle en savait bien d'autres sur les gens de Langon-les-Vignes, dont elle était la chronique vivante et où elle promène encore sa silhouette de fée carabosse en capote à fleurs et en douillette de taffetas puce.

S.S. Dec 1912

ALL WORK AND—NO PLAY

By George Jean Nathan

HOW Mr. Winthrop Ames, a Bostonian and a Harvard graduate, but in spite of that a man of well developed education and scope of viewpoint, could have failed so signally with such persuasive and admirable material as Arthur Schnitzler's "ANATOL," is a mystery as insoluble as any that has offered itself to me in my years of theatrical attendance. Carelessly cast, unskillfully directed, erroneously conceived, with an almost total lack of grasp on the all-necessary Viennese mood, this gentle Schnitzlerian cycle relating the amours of an Austrian aristocrat was revealed distorted and crippled, bereft of its spread of twilight romance and breathing instead the crass furnished flat prosaicism of the red American by-ways.

"ANATOL" (I decline to subscribe to Mr. Ames's rechristening, "The Affairs of Anatol") is, of course, a ticklish fabric for the theatrical eyes and ears of a green nation whose point of view on the mistress question is bounded on the north by the divorce courts, the south by furtive hotels, the east by shock and scandal and the west by utter social, moral and physical annihilation; for the eyes and ears of a nation whose literary and dramatic cultivation has progressed to a degree where it even now is beginning to suspect that Schnitzler-of-Vienna may not merely be the English for *wiener schnitzel*, and that Hofmannsthal may not, after all, be the German name for the Hoffman House rathskeller. In a country where a pair of tortoise shell spectacles passes for erudition, where the dropping of a coin into a Salvation Army lassie's tambourine passes for cosmic sympathy, where a palate for

Pilsner and Würzburger or a taste for chutney and Worcestershire sauce passes for an international understanding, the Schnitzler mood in its finest moments must anticipate the encountering of such majestic objections and decapitating criticisms as, "Um, *very* suggestive!" and "H'm, *most* risqué!" What, then, must it expect to encounter at the hands of a lowly people when it is given an interpretation that shows it stripped of its almost every vital element of foreignness, of its almost every quivering note and vibrant chord of temperament, of its almost every fugitive, dreaming shade? When the high comedy mood of "Die Frage an das Schicksal" is translated as pseudo-psychological tragedy and the farce comedy mood of "Anatol's Hochzeitsmorgen" is interpreted as problem drama with acrobatic comic relief—what then?

With the exception of Miss Doris Keane's performance of Mimi in "Abschiedssouper," there is no more Viennese air to the Little Theater's presentation than there is to the Viennese musical comedies produced in New York. The episode "Weihnachtseinkäufe" ("A Christmas Present") makes an impression despite its lack of atmosphere, because "Weihnachtseinkäufe" is one of those odd heart tapestries interwoven with universality, because it is made of the magic that nothing can dispel. Mr. John Barrymore, in trying to be "foreign," succeeds in giving an excellent imitation of a Broadway Jew, and Mr. Oswald Yorke, in the properly bubbling philosophical, worldly role of Anatol's friend Max, succeeds in presenting an admirable picture of Lawrence D'Orsay in a German make-up. The Granville

Barker paraphrase is employed in the Ames production. Mr. Barker has done a pretty good job, although I must protest loudly, in view of the uncompromising calibre of "ANATOL," to such vulgar, if petty, distortions of translation as the following:

ANATOL: . . . so fühle ich nicht dass ich sie belüge, auch wenn ich in der Nacht vorher am Busen einer andern geruht.

ANATOL: . . . is that lying to her, just because the night before I've been saying the same thing (I love you) to another?

and

ANATOL: Betrogen hab' ich dich—wie du's verdienst—Tag für Tag—Nacht für Nacht—ich kam von ihr wenn ich dich traf—ich ging zu ihr wenn ich dich verliess—

ANATOL: I have behaved very badly to you, dear Mimi.

I object, too, to the stealthy alteration of Hilda's age from twenty-one to twenty-five to put at greater ease sensitively super-moral Anglo-Saxon souls. And I object to the abortion of Schnitzler's stage directions and the consequent cheapening of the effect of the episode at the curtain of "Weihnachtseinkäufe." Because it is a common offense in the American theater, I wish to call attention to the pronunciation on the part of one of the male performers in the company of such a sentence as: "If it were so, I might have been possessed again of the right idea." In the attempt at superior and lofty refinement of diction, thus the male performer: "If it were so, I might have been possessed agayne of the right idear." I desire also to mention in passing that Anatol is pronounced Anatol—not Annytol, Anatul, Anotul or yet Annatoool.

To Mr. George Foster Platt, who assisted Mr. Ames in the staging of the Schnitzler work, and whom I have long regarded as one of the foremost and most efficient of American producers, I must commend a deeper reading in the Austrian's bookshelves. To understand "ANATOL" sufficiently well before hazarding to throw it on the proscenium screen, it is advisable first to read and appreciate that the Schnitzler of "Der Ruf des Lebens" may be the Schnitzler of "Der Einsame Weg," even the Schnitzler of "Liebelei," but scarcely the

Schnitzler of "Reigen" or—particularly—of "ANATOL." As a quick education in Schnitzlerism for American audiences who have not much time to spare from Sam Bernard and African hunting moving pictures, I submit "Der Weg ins Freie."

The scenery disclosed in the Little Theater's exhibit infers many days of careful thought and labor. So does the stage lighting; so does the stage furniture; so does every physical detail concerned with the production. There evidently has been much labor—in every direction but the dramatic manuscript. The result: All work and—no play!

There are numerous kinds of fever—double fever, double quotidian fever, double tertian fever, fermentation fever, scarlet fever, aphthous fever, ileotyphus fever, thermic fever, malarial fever, le-vant fever, sextan fever, cyprus fever, carbuncular fever, hemogastric fever, idiopathic fever, Sierra Leone fever, yellow fever, typhomalarial fever, spirillum fever, cacatory fever, hay fever, exacerbating fever, icteric fever, enteromesenteric fever, melanuric fever, pythogenic fever, mucous fever, articular fever, dothienteric fever, hectic infantile fever, gastrohepatic fever, petechial fever, nosocomial fever, solar fever, Chagres fever, gastrosplenic fever, eruptive articular fever, ataxic fever and the strange kind of fever that attacks newspaper dramatic critics whenever a Scotch play comes along and persuades them to rave over the "quaint charm" of Scotch characters.

Intrinsically, there is no more "quaint charm" to Scotch characters than there is to Zambesian characters or Bulgarian characters or Kentucky mountaineer characters or German characters or Assyrian characters or any other characters. Rather do Scotch characters appeal to us because they lack "quaint charm." The Scotch are a race of unlovely visage, of ear-digging dialect, of harsh mien and grayish tone. Certainly none of these attributes is either quaint or charming. Nor are they combined to be characterized as quaint and charming. The truth is, we of the theater-attending crew are sick of "quaintness" and sick of "charm," and

gladden at the sight of stage figures devoid of these widely prevalent and common qualities. The change is as welcome as rough country food in August after eleven months of imposing pasties, mushroomed meats, champagne cantaloupe and interstellar potatoes.

"A SCRAPE O' THE PEN" is a pleasant session with these profane people, by no means so delicate a meeting as was provided us in Mr. Graham Moffat's previous exhibit, but still a pleasant one. The plot into which the author has injected his characters, however, is about the most archaic thing that has not yet been thought of by Samuel Shipman, Henri Bernstein or Messieurs Cailavet and De Flers. The performance is a careful one.

A flirtatious memory does not recall whether it was in H. F. Clinton's "Fasti Hellenici," Cuq's "Le Conseil des Empereurs d'Auguste à Dioclétien," Durr's "Die Majestätsprozesse unter dem Kaiser Tiberius," Lipps's "Raumaesthetik und Geometrisch-optische Täuschungen," L. W. Stern's "Psychologie der Veränderungsauffassung," Galton's essay in the *Psychological Review* for 1894 on "Arithmetic by Smell" or in one of my own early and sophomoric feuilletonistic briefs that there occurred the observation that the one leading difference between women and horses was that the better bred the horse the less it could be whipped to good result, and the better bred the woman the more she could be whipped to good result. The debate over the salutary effect of a beating upon a woman—the affirmative of which is always upheld (verbally) by gentlemen of squirt physique and Vassar bicep, and the negative of which is always upheld (in public) by sailors, prize fighters, ice men and the bartenders in the business districts—has not interested me greatly in later years for two reasons: Firstly, because the fastuous idea of beating a lady to make her behave seems to me to be quite as jocose as the idea of beating a child to make it read Edna Ferber; and secondly, because the fist and rod are invariably employed as subterfuges by such men as

seek thereby to conceal their total deficiency in vocabulary, personal magnetism, humor, alcoholic sobriety and hair. While I abhor feminists and pseudo-feminists as I abhor quotations from Ruskin when made use of to illustrate some allegedly modern point of view, and while a single highball is sufficient to induce me to wax eloquent on the exedra on the virtues of the Strindbergian thesis, the argumentation of Dumas and the Schnitzler mood and attitude, I still cannot resist the gross temptation to hold irreverent and apostate internal jubilee when the female spanking problem is advocated or indulged in by my fellows as the Great Solution.

Although I personally cannot discharge my vote on the side of the beneficent power of the petticoat spank, I am yet able to detect a certain sporadic existibility of charm and value in the device. And when comes a courageous playwright who exhibits this device in action and who provides us with a whiff of relief from the nauseating theatrical surge of feminist sentimentality and ladyish fanfaronade, I cannot but look on him with esteem. I am beginning to speak of "THE BRUTE," by Frederic Arnold Kummer, a play that discloses two particularly well conceived and executed scenes, two very well sketched characters, a commendable bravery in presenting that rare dramatic bird—the man's side of it—even if it discloses much that is proportionately tasteless and woe-begone and sepulchral, such as a little curly-headed Bobbie to bring mamma back to papa, and one of the beautifully conventional series of vapid struts and yells and bosom-heavings that ensue at the ends of second acts and are known as "big scenes." For his veracious viewpoint in the matter of the unbrained, commanding, demanding, upstart American wife and the patient, working, hoping husband, however, I extend to the playwright my respects. While on the topic of punching the ladies, let me quote what is to this mind the best dramatic treatment of the kind. I am indebted to Strindberg's four-act comedy "Comrades" (comparatively un-

known in this country). Berta is Axel's wife. Both are painters living in Paris. Each has submitted a work to the Salon, and Berta's alone is accepted. The woman begins to taunt the man, and plans by way of final mortification for him that his rejected work shall be brought back during a party scheduled for the following evening.

BERTA: And so you want to be revenged because you have been placed below me?

AXEL: Nothing could place me below you. I stood high above you even when I painted your picture.

BERTA: When you painted my picture! Say that again and I will strike you!

AXEL: You, who despise brute force? Well, strike me if you will.

BERTA (*aiming a blow at him*): Do you think I cannot?

AXEL (*seizing both of her wrists and holding them tight, tighter, tighter still*): No, not that. (*He wrenches her wrists 'round as in a vise.*) Are you convinced now that I am the physically stronger? Bow down—or I will break you!

BERTA: Do you dare to strike a woman?

AXEL: Why not? I know only one reason why I should forbear.

BERTA: And that is—

AXEL: That you are not responsible for your actions.

BERTA (*writhing in his grasp*): Let me go!

AXEL: When you beg my forgiveness! Down on your knees! (*He knocks her to the ground with one hand.*) Now look up to me from below! That is your place, the place you yourself have chosen.

BERTA: Axel! I don't know you any longer! Are you the man who swore to love me, to help me?

AXEL: Yes. I was strong then, but you clipped the hair of my strength away while my tired head lay in your lap. . . . Stand up! . . . Why are you crying?

BERTA: I don't know. Perhaps because I am weak.

AXEL: You see! I was your strength. When I took back what was my own, there was nothing left for you. You were like a rubber ball that I blew out: when I threw you aside, you collapsed.

Plays like this, says Ashley Dukes, have gained Strindberg the reputation of being a brutalist. Plays themed as "THE BRUTE" will not gain reputations in America. Sachet screeches too loudly here, and the scent of talcum powder and Jockey Club is too hypnotic on the native man's naive nostril. Mr. Ernest Glendinning and Miss Jeffreys Lewis perform effectively in the Kummer exhibit.

Excerpts from the diary of Satan:

OCTOBER 8, 1912.

In company with Mr. Nathan, who has been verbally consigned to me for a long time by several aggravated theatrical producers, I this night attended the musical comedy called "TANTALIZING TOMMY"—book by Morton and Gault, lyrics by Ross, music by Felix. Upon observing the heroine make her first clap-clap-clap-clap entrance following a loud explosion off stage left, indicative of the blowing up of an automobile, I jotted a memorandum on my program to keep my eye peeled for the sponsors. I already have a round dozen fricasseed gentlemen living with me who employed this device during their days on Earth. The leading lady in the exhibit received my indorsement for delivering a lyric in which she rendered the words "satisfacshawn" and "imitashawn" and for referring to a certain species of sweetish drink as "chawclut." The soubrette pleased me immensely by alluding to a two-seated bicycle as a "tandumb," and I was gratified to observe that humor was extracted through the droll conceit of having one person stamp heavily on another's foot, and through the further delicious device of causing one man periodically to give another man a resounding whack on the back.

Warning note: One of the characters had been named Lord Ipecac.

OCTOBER 9, 1912.

Attended "THE CHARITY GIRL," another musical exhibit—book and lyrics by Edward Peple and tunes by Victor Hollaender. After sitting through the three acts of this piece, I am ready to state that I wouldn't even let it cross the threshold of my place. I've got to draw the line somewhere! I confess, however, I was sorely tempted. A twenty-minute pantomime of seasickness indulged in by one of the lady performers, and a song by a Miss Blossom Seeley about as dainty as an appendix in alcohol, as refined as an East Side clam chowder and in as delicate taste as the window of a Sixth Avenue jeweler, urged me strongly to call up my Third

Grand Chef and beseech him to get the gas range in order.

Warning note: One of the characters had been named Madame Bowwowski.

OCTOBER 10, 1912.

"JUNE MADNESS," the play by Henry Kitchell Webster that my good friends who compose the Drama League of America held in high favor, arrived yesterday. Whenever a play is produced on Earth containing the pious line, "There are two kinds of women—good women and bad women," I order my First Grand Chambermaid to hurry up and get another room ready. I have down here a thousand times more women that the Earth knew as "good" women than women it had labeled "bad." I have sent out a hurry call for another playwright who recently had one of his characters, a German lady, speak broken English thus: "Das Fräulein right is." This is such a common practice among American one-tongued playwrights that I am determined to put a stop to it. Inasmuch as, to make one illustration serve as a general text, the Teutonic is "Das Fräulein ist recht," any German just learning to speak English would utter the words in like sequence and would not, as so many untutored Americans believe from their joke pamphlets, invariably place the verb at the sentence's end.

Saw tonight "THE WOMAN HATERS," a musical play from "Die Frauenfreser." I am sorry I can't have this piece. But the facts that it contains really harmonious music by Edmund Eysler, together with an intelligent and amusing narrative; Mr. Joseph Santley, one of the few so-called "juveniles" whose deportment suggests acquaintanceship with the drawing room; Mr. Leslie Kenyon, one of the few "Englishmen" whose character work does not repose wholly in a monocle and an "I say, old top!" and Miss Sallie Fisher, one of the few musical comedy leading women who suggest Webster rather than Rector and "keep your elbows off the table, Sallie" from solicitous parents when she was a little girl, compel me to keep my hands away.

OCTOBER 11, 1912.

To "OH! OH! DELPHINE" this night—book and lyrics by the able C. M. S. McLellan, music by Ivan Caryll—founded so far as tale goes on the Gallic farce "Villa Primerose." Mr. Nathan names it the best musical comedy of the day, and I am sorry to say he is right. No guests for my hotel here! I have telegraphed my Sixth Grand Stenographer, however, to send an invitation to any librettist who in the future pushes his plot along by having the perplexed and troubled young hero suddenly rush up to the old colonel and whisper: "I've got an idea! You can help me." Also a query as to why an audience at a music show always laughs when a man comes on the stage carrying a lot of bundles. Also a query to determine why an actor who is playing the part of a gambler or a police sergeant or a captain of industry thinks that a cigar clutched in the right hand corner of the mouth with an upward tilt signifies resoluteness and vicious determination.

OCTOBER 12, 1912.

Saw "THE CASE OF BECKY" this night, the Edward Locke play that was reviewed in THE SMART SET last season. Inasmuch as I do not know anything at all about abnormal psychology, the thesis of the exhibit, the play impressed me. Similarly, it impressed a number of other people.

OCTOBER 13, 1912.

Will leave the rest of the plays to Mr. Nathan. I've got my eye on that young fellow!

The reproduction in this country of "MAN AND SUPERMAN," one of the few modern day comedies that concerns itself with something worth listening to twice, one of the few modern day comedies that succeeds in distracting the auditor's attention from the beautiful gowns of the leading lady, the perfectly grand lighting effects and the wonderfully real look of the rosebush at L. U. E., provides me with the long-wished-for opportunity of making a little speech on prudery. In "The Revolutionist's Handbook," that is mentioned only in

passing in the play, one comes upon these excellent words:

"The prudery of the newspaper is, like the prudery of the dinner table, a mere difficulty of education and language. We are taught not to think decently on certain subjects, and consequently we have no language for them except indecent language. We therefore have to declare them unfit for public discussion, because the only terms in which we can conduct the discussion are unfit for public use. . . . The ordinary modern journalist, who has never discussed such matters except in ribaldry, cannot write a simple comment on a divorce case without a conscious shamefulness or a furtive facetiousness that makes it impossible to read the comment aloud in company. All this ribaldry and prudery (the two are the same) does not mean that people do not feel decently on the subject; on the contrary, it is just the depth and seriousness of our feeling that makes its desecration by vile language and coarse humor intolerable."

Excellent words, surely. Yet words that do not sufficiently plunge the dagger, at least so far as Americans are regarded. Prudery, in this country an evil as widespread, as tartarean and as deeply rooted as political graft or social hypocrisy or churchgoing for spectacular reasons or wearing derbies, is what has kept the United States, among all the nations, last in drama, last in art, last in music, last in the cosmic fashions—and first in the hearts of its own provincial countrymen. Prudery, in America, is born not only of lack of education, not only of defective vocabulary, but of public feeling as well. Public feeling argues and insists on vague synonyms for concrete, indelible nouns—life making, race making, nation making nouns. I have it from one of the foremost physicians and surgeons in this country that prudery is alone responsible for the terrible spread of a certain disease among its people at the moment. (This being America, I may not name the disease.) I have it from as able a practical political economist as the nation holds that prudery is alone responsible for the truly

appalling spread of pavement immorality in our larger cities. (This being America, I may not name the species of immorality any more clearly.) And I have it from three of the most exemplary, if ultra-practical, of native dramatists that prudery is alone responsible for the sentimental and drivish piffle with which they are compelled to seek their reputations.

And I have it from myself that these various gentlemen are correct. Its sycophantic prudery will provide to the United States what the showy weekly naval parades and extravagant military gazing-stocks will some day provide to England—a sudden awakening to the fact that a people who have stuck gaudy epaulets on their minds while other minds have been busy fortifying themselves behind solid trenches (trenches made of what is flouted by the epauleted prudes as dirt) have only been impressing and fooling themselves. "MAN AND SUPERMAN" is just the sort of play that all American young girls, young boys, clergymen and other undeveloped intellects should be sent to see.

If you can imagine yourself traveling through China in a Baltimore and Ohio freight car and alternately looking out of the window at the impressive scenery and reading a long poem by Clinton Scollard, you will have simultaneously imagined for yourself "THE DAUGHTER OF HEAVEN," the Pierre Loti-Judith Gautier Oriental dramatic spectacle visible at the Century Theater. What poetry may have been in the original manuscript has been carefully removed by George Egerton, the translator; what drama may have been at hand for the theme was carefully removed by the original authors. And the scenery, though truly stunning in every sense, takes a mighty long time in the changing. Viewed as a spectacle, we have here an effulgent and brilliant set of slowly moving pictures, pictures flashing color and heat and bursting their frames with their very opulence. But viewed as anything else, we discover nothing but something that *might* have been drama.

A VISIT TO A SHORT STORY FACTORY

By H. L. Mencken

"LET us assume," says the learned Prof. Henry Albert Phillips, in his sagacious treatise on "THE PLOT OF THE SHORT STORY" (*Stanhope-Dodge*), "that the author of our proposed story has merely arrived at the point where he has determined to write a story. He has not a single specific idea as to either a particular plot or a definite kind of a story. He is obsessed by no particular mood. All he knows is that he is going to write a story."

And then, with the utmost particularity and *naïveté* and without the slightest trace of humor, Prof. Phillips proceeds to show how the trick is done—how the sweating fictioneer, spitting on his hands, turns to his stock of plots, all neatly indexed under five heads and thirty-six sub-heads; and how, after examining fifty of them, he fails to find anything to inflame him; and how he then turns to his stock of titles, two thousand strong, and is struck dumb by the originality and pungency of "The Long Bow"; and how this title arouses in him a memory of a girl he once met at a party, a "weird sort of creature" who lied like a stockbroker . . . "interesting girl, tho . . . had a way about her that almost excited pity, tho"; and how he then builds up around this "weird creature tho" a plot which runs aground on the fact that he doesn't know why she lies and can't arrive to a plausible theory; and how he despairs of the enterprise and is on the point of abandoning her altogether when "in a moment of self-distrust" he picks up his book of plots again and is arrested by a clipping of a newspaper article

about two drug fiends, and how he then jumps up with a whoop (I quote literally) and sees his way to a masterpiece; and how, his homeric labors ended at last, the sweat drying upon his brow, the agonies of parturition ceasing, he dashes off the following "skeleton":

"The Long Bow"—Margaret, who deceives all her friends . . . a visionary and worse . . . is finally discovered taking a dope pill . . . people, community, friends, relatives, in family where Margaret lives, decide to go to Margaret's town . . . they find even that nonexistent . . . a figment of her brain . . . they feel as if a cataclysm has wiped out a community of friends . . . when they return to the house, Margaret is gone, and all they find in her room is a hypodermic and complete dope outfit . . . she and her village never again heard of, but always spoken of with reverence as of honored dead.

This skeleton, of course, is not marketable as it stands. Editors want fat as well as bones. The short story of commerce, as everyone knows, must be "not less than 1,500 words in length, and not more than 5,000." Very well; the laying on of the necessary tissue, the padding of the hips, the building of the shoulders, the development of the bust—all this is a labor of no great difficulty to a union man.

First of all, he changes the name of the heroine. "'Margaret' is too substantial for her character. He scans thru his list of a hundred or more temperamental names and picks out 'Muriel.'" Then he changes the title. "The Long Bow," true enough, has inflamed and fecundated him, but he wants something dismal, unearthly, Edgar Allan Poe-like. So he hits upon "Arden—The Village of Despair," and this

profound title "gives him a quantity of new inspiration." After that his sailing is easy. All he has to guard against is giving away his story. He must hold off the morphine as long as possible. When the secret is revealed at last, it must have the force of a mule kick, a boiler explosion, the arrival of twins. So he puts it at the very end: *Morphine! Bang!! Whoop-ee-e-e!!! Quick curtain!* The orchestra strikes up a march in C major. A fat woman has fainted. A critic is bleeding at the nose.

Thus the process of manufacturing stimulating fiction for the great and ammoniacal masses of the plain people, as revealed by a self-confessed master of the craft. With the absurd pretensions of highbrow authors, long of hair and unclean of cuff, that craft has nothing whatever to do. It is a well organized and respectable business, and fit for family men. One may practise it in an office building, aided by a stenographer, a steel filing cabinet and an adding machine. Its customary office hours are from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., with a hiatus of one hour for luncheon and a half-holiday on Saturday. A man so engaged, if he be sober and industrious, may eventually build up a trade of \$5,000 a year and hold himself the equal of any master paperhanger or Bismarck herring importer in Christendom. He is no common author. He needs no poppy nor mandragora to give him ideas. He has his stock of 2,000 plots, elaborately cross-indexed. He does not have to dredge inspiration out of his experience, like Conrad or Kipling or Bret Harte; he has his book of newspaper clippings. Inspiration, indeed, is to him a mere name for folly, the symbol of a childish affectation, a refuge for asses. Does a motorman need inspiration to keep his car on its lawful route? Does a plumber wait for inspiration to wipe a joint? Does it take inspiration for a judge to decide in favor of the man with the mazuma? Of course not. Then why should a manufacturer of short stories need it? The demand is for such-and-such a quality of goods. O. Henrys, let us say, are off ten points. Richard Harding Davises and Edgar Allan Poes

are bearish, with little demand. Only Montague Glasses show any response to the favorable bank statement and the optimistic crop reports. Well, then, why not clear the shelves of dead stock and turn out some marketable goods? Why not let the customer decide what he wants, and then give him an honest, hardwood article, as sound as he can get in the next shop?

I advise you to read Prof. Phillips's sapient and chatty book. What is more, I urge and implore you to read it. It is a liberal education in custom-made literature. It is a masterpiece of professional indelicacy. Once you have got it down, you will understand better than I can ever hope to expound it to you the cheapness, the childishness, the unspeakable trashiness of most of the so-called fiction that we of this club try to wade through each month. To find its equal for naive balderdash you must go to the tomes of the New Thoughters, with their gay directions for tapping the Subconscious and entering the Silence. To find its better for platitudes solemnly mouthed, you must go to the International Sunday School Lessons.

I beg pardon? Did the tall gentlemen in the third row say anything? Am I unaware that the short story which Prof. Phillips manufactures before our eyes, carefully stuffing its tummy with excelsior and padding out its hips and pinking its cheeks and sticking on its ears—am I unaware that this creaking and incredible story was printed in *THE SMART SET* of December, 1910? No, I am not unaware of it; and neither am I apologizing for it. Nothing is perfect in this senile and spavined old world, not even the unconscious humor of Prof. Phillips's book. There are *genii* in Indiana who need only confess the whole truth to make the Professor seem a very pallbearer. I, myself, could write a more alkaline and appalling volume upon book reviewing. George Jean Nathan—but let George pass: the secrets of his lewd trade are too awful to think of. Meanwhile, what I wanted to say is that *THE SMART SET* does its darndest. It tries to get the best stories in Christendom, at whatever cost

in blood, sweat or treasure. But sometimes, alas, Christendom produces no best for six weeks running. Then to Terra Haute, to Bayonne, to Connells-ville for trade goods!

More bosh. To wit, in "THE DREAM OF LOVE AND DEATH," by Edward Carpenter (*Kennerley*), an English platitudinarian who seems to be arousing a good deal of excitement of late among the virgin reviewers. What is genuinely valuable in the book is a wordy paraphrase of chapter eleven of the last volume of Havelock Ellis's exhaustive "Studies in the Psychology of Sex." What Ellis pleads for there is a frank recognition of the essential decency of passion, a recognition granted as a matter of course by the Turks, the Hindoos, the Japanese and all other truly clean-minded races. It is only among Christian peoples that so palpable a fact is denied. We alone make the supreme experience of life a shame and a hissing, to be mentioned, when mentioned at all, as something intolerably disgraceful and degrading. Ellis, of course, speaks plainly, but Carpenter, having a chemically base audience in front of him, must needs put his argument in the form of vague hints and obfuscatory half-statements. How many readers, unacquainted with Ellis beforehand, will ever know what Carpenter is driving at on Page 41, in the paragraph beginning "And if the man"? Not many, I respectfully opine. And yet it would be unwise, I suppose, if not downright dangerous, to speak more plainly. I, myself, in this present paragraph, hem, haw and keep off the actual subject. Carpenter, at worst, has courage enough to touch its outermost frontiers. But why, having tackled so brave a job, does he then turn his book into a treatise on the occult, with anecdotes about spooks, spectral hands, poltergeists and other such preposterous fowl? Why drag in Katie King, that ancient fraud? Why try to make it appear that the properties of radium give support to the puerile tricks of spiritualist mediums? Why destroy whatever value the book may have by leading it from sense into platitudes and from platitudes into piffle?

One indubitable use, however, remains to its credit: it may inspire the more intelligent reader to go to Havelock Ellis himself and so make him drink of a spring truly Pierian. Ellis is one of the most learned and clear-minded Englishmen of our time. A psychiatrist, a psychologist and a sociologist of very high rank, he is also a charming writer and a sound critic. He is the editor of the invaluable Contemporary Science Series, and has himself contributed several volumes to it. He is one of the editors of the excellent Mermaid Series of old English dramatists. He was one of the first Englishmen to write intelligently about Ibsen. His book on the causes and processes of dreams is the best in any language. Saving only Sir Francis Galton, he has made a more valuable contribution to the statistical study of genius than any other man. His great monograph on "Man and Woman" is the starting point of every current discussion of secondary sexual differences.

But above and beyond all these works are his six volumes of "Studies in the Psychology of Sex." Here we have the labor of years, the labor of a scientific Hercules. Every pertinent fact and observation, in whatever language, is set down, weighed, appraised. The abysmal delvings of Germans and Russians, the gay flights of Frenchmen and Italians, the tedious figurings of Englishmen and Americans, even the views and traditions of Arabs and Chinese, are put in order, compared, digested, studied. And to all this staggering welter of material, to all this homeric accumulation of data, Ellis brings the path-finding faculty of a trained and penetrating mind. He has that supreme sort of common sense which is the mother and father of genuine science. He discerns the general fact in the Alpine rubbish heap of special facts. The result is a magnificent contribution to human knowledge—a contribution not immediately assimilable, of course, by the folk of Christendom, but one that they must eventually get down, in the sugar-coated pills of lesser sages, if they are ever to shake off their abominable doctrine that

the only decent way to discuss the most important of all the facts of life is by silly indirection and with nasty giggles.

Another professor of sex who leans heavily upon Ellis is Earl Barnes, author of "WOMAN IN MODERN SOCIETY" (*Huebsch*). Mr. Barnes, it appears, is a discreet and modest fellow; he does not attempt to solve the woman question in one volume duodecimo, but contents himself with stating it. In that effort, however, he finds it needful to criticise the solutions of more confident sages, and here he writes intelligently and persuasively. The trouble with most of our tubthumpers and mad mullahs, he points out, is that they forget the abysmal and incurable difference between man and woman. What is sauce for the gander should be sauce for the goose: so these amateur messiahs argue. But, in point of fact, it seldom is. You may give the girls the vote, you may admit them to universities, pulpits and rathskellers, you may grant them the inestimable boon of working in sweatshops, you may let them drink, smoke and swear like archdeacons, but the fact will always remain that, head for head, they are weaker than men, and less enterprising than men, and so less fitted for the battle of life than men. Not long ago the suffragettes down in Maryland were arguing for the cause on the ground that, given the vote, women would not have to stand up in street cars! There you have it. On the one hand they reach out fatuously for man's privileges; on the other hand they cling hunkerously to woman's privileges. George Bernard Shaw, the most serious man in the world, once stated the case so clearly that the English people, wholly unaccustomed to serious discussion, rocked with mirth. "I am in favor," said he, "of equal rights for the two sexes. Why should I be forbidden to knock a woman down when she insults me?" In the whole world, I dare say, there are not ten women, setting aside grand opera contraltos, who dare follow him so far. They roar and they rage for rights, and bit by bit they get what they demand, but all the while a sharp sense of de-

pendence, of biological inferiority, or, at all events, of indelible difference remains.

"Man's happiness is 'I will'; woman's happiness is 'He will'!" So said the late Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, a lunatic and a scoundrel. Not quite a truth, perhaps, but still a very respectable half-truth. Give any normal woman her choice between a good job and a good marriage, and she will choose so surely and so explosively that the prospective bridegroom will be lucky if he doesn't lose an eye. But here, of course, I merely state platitudes, as Mr. Barnes does in his book. Where he strikes out into greener fields is in his argument that the women of our civilization still lack certain large and valuable rights, for all their absurd reaching for the rights of men. Why should any civilized woman submit to motherhood unwillingly? Why should her share of the family funds be determined, not by her own needs and desires, but by her partner's generosity? Why should it be assumed that the man she is willing to obey and venerate today is the same man she will want to obey and venerate tomorrow? Here, it must be plain, there is room for genuine progress. Woman the dependent must cease to be woman the parasite and slave. The so-called "lady" is as offensive to the decencies as the rest of the *pediculidæ*. The ideal of the years to come is a woman emancipated from convention and superstition, a free agent in human society, the full equal of her man—not a grotesque parody of that man, arrayed absurdly in his *toga virilis*, smoking his bad cigars, monkeying with his labors and vices, but a creature standing squarely on her own rotund legs, not a pseudo-man but an authentic woman, not a grotesque blend of angel and grafter, but a free equal. That woman, of course, will not submit to tyranny, whether gross or petty. She will not live with her man ten days after she has ceased *wanting* to live with him. But who but a scoundrel or a cry baby, on that brighter and better tomorrow, will ever ask her to do so?

To the novels, b'gosh! Soaring to the

empyrean heights of philosophy, manufacturing strange and racy syllogisms, plucking the bass harp of the transcendental ethic, we have quite forgotten the novels. Alack, how they smirk and leer at us in their prismatic rows—blue, yellow, orange, violet, purple, green, scarlet, vermilion—each with its elegant gilt stamping, each with its canned review attached, every second one with its flaming pictures by Arthur I. Keller, Howard Chandler Christy and André Castaigne! And how flat and piffish we sometimes find the fare within!

For instance, in "PANSY MEARS," by Horace W. C. Newte (*Lane*), an incredibly stupid yarn about a country girl's seduction in London and the ensuing running amuck of her peasant lover, young George Tarling. Mr. Newte has one shining talent: he writes quite the worst dialogue I have encountered in years. And when he comes to scenes of conflict and passion—e. g., the scene wherein George essays to strangle Pansy and is dissuaded by her maidenly tears—he contrives to be almost as stagey and ridiculous as the honest lads who compose "pathetic" acts for vaudeville. Even sillier stuff is to be found in— But I spare your feelings by heaving the volume at a passing policeman. There it goes—and good riddance! Another after it! And yet another! Half a dozen more! Good! The shelf clears. Better stuff grows visible, tales sanely and divertingly told. For example, "MRS. AMES," by E. F. Benson (*Doubleday-Page*).

This Benson is the same who wrote "Dodo," that perennial model of the more bilious lady authors, and here again he concerns himself with the eternal triangle, but that is as far as the resemblance goes. "Dodo" showed the bitterness of youth; "MRS. AMES" has the mellow glow of middle age. But though he has thus changed his outlook upon life, Mr. Benson has by no means changed his method of describing it. He is still more concerned with the motive than with the act, a great deal more with the character than with the event. His best pages are those in which the static element completely overlays the

dynamic. Not much happens, in the objective sense, in this delightful story of an English country town. Major Lyndhurst Ames, true enough, involves himself in a lamentable flirtation with Millicent Evans, the doctor's wife, and in a moment of weakness (regretted almost instantaneously) he allows her to inveigle him into plans for an elopement, but after all, no such elopement actually takes place. It is Amy, the Major's wife, who saves the day, Amy who is ten long years his senior, Amy who has had her spree and her repentance, too, for didn't she once bawl "Votes for women!" at a political meeting, and so give Riseborough an enchanting sensation, and her husband a memory to live down? Amy saves the elopers at the brink. Her good sense, the grace and curse of her seniority, rout romance. And Riseborough, unsuspecting, goes on in its rut. Nothing happens.

But with what fine art Mr. Benson has adorned and enlivened that nothing! How sharply and humorously he sets that little group of dull folk before us—Mrs. Ames and her dumb fear of the passing years, the Major and his half-hearted philandering, young Harry Ames and his calf love, Millie Evans and her ill-starred revolt, her doctor-husband and his fatuous good nature, Mrs. Altham and her gossiping, Henry Altham and his preposterous golfing, old General Fortescue and his discreet boozing! Dull folk, but only on the surface. Get under their hides, be privy to their yearnings, look into their hearts, and you will find the whole drama of life and death in progress there. It is only, of course, the farthest ripple of great adventure that reaches them, but that ripple is sufficient to bring peril to such fragile craft. Mr. Benson's virtue is that he makes the fact plain. He throws these pygmies up, as it were, upon a large screen. He gives stature and bulk to these small town Cleopatras and Antonys, these mute, inglorious Romeos and Juliets. He achieves, in brief, a genuine novel in this day of quasi-novels and pseudo-novels, for he shows us a group of human beings reacting plausibly against their

environment and dragged through a devil's dance by their destiny; and to the picture he adds a penetrating and illuminating interpretation. The book, of course, is no masterpiece. Its limitations are the eternal limitations of the small canvas. It is too close to the particular to leave much sense of the general. But so far as it goes, it goes clearly and delightfully, for it is the work of a man who has looked upon the human comedy with a seeing eye and who knows how to write.

* "ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE," by Willa S. Cather (*Houghton-Mifflin*), has the influence of Edith Wharton written all over it, and there is no need for the canned review on the cover to call attention to the fact—the which remark, let me hasten to add, is not to be taken as a sneer but as hearty praise, for the novelizing novice who chooses Mrs. Wharton as her model is at least one who knows a hawk from a handsaw, an artist from an artisan. The majority of beginners in this our fair land choose E. Phillips Oppenheim or Marie Corelli; if we have two schools, then one is the School of Plot and the other is the School of Piffle. But Miss Cather, as I have said, is intelligent enough to aim higher, and the thing she offers must be set down a very promising piece of writing. Its chief defect is a certain triteness in structure. When Bartley Alexander, the great engineer, discovers that he is torn hopelessly between a genuine affection for his wife, Winifred, and a wild passion for his old flame, Hilda Burgoyne, it seems a banal device to send him out on his greatest bridge a moment before it falls, and so drown him in the St. Lawrence. This is not a working out of the problem; it is a mere evasion of the problem. In real life how would such a man solve it for himself? Winifred, remember, is in Boston and Hilda is in London, and business takes Bartley across the ocean four or five times a year. No doubt the authentic male would let the situation drift. In the end he would sink into the lean and slippered pantaloons by two firesides, a highly respectable and reasonably contented bigamist (unofficially, of course), a more or less successful and

satisfied wrestler with fate. Such things happen. I could tell you tales. But I tell them not. All I do is to throw out the suggestion that the shivering of the triangle is far from inevitable. Sometimes, for all the hazards of life, it holds together for years. But the fictioneers are seldom content until they have destroyed it by catastrophe. That way is the thrilling way, and more important still, it is the easy way.

Aside from all this, Miss Cather gives a very good account of herself indeed. She writes carefully, skillfully, artistically. Her dialogue has life in it and gets her story ahead. Her occasional paragraphs of description are full of feeling and color. She gives us a well drawn picture of the cold Winifred, a better one of the emotional and alluring Hilda and a fairly credible one of Bartley himself—this last a difficult business, for the genius grows flabby in a book. It is seldom, indeed, that fiction can rise above second rate men. The motives and impulses and processes of mind of the superman are too recondite for plausible analysis. It is easy enough to explain how John Smith courted and won his wife, and even how William Jones fought and died for his country, but it would be impossible to explain (or, at any rate, to convince by explaining) how Beethoven wrote the Fifth Symphony, or how Pasteur reasoned out the hydrophobia vaccine, or how Stonewall Jackson arrived at his miracles of strategy. The thing has been tried often, but it has always ended in failure. Those supermen of fiction who are not mere shadows and dummies are supermen reduced to saving ordinariness. Shakespeare made Hamlet a comprehensible and convincing man by diluting that half of him which was Shakespeare by a half which was a college sophomore. In the same way he saved Lear by making him, in large part, a silly and obscene old man—the blood brother of any average ancient of any average English taproom. Tackling Caesar, he was rescued from disaster by Brutus's knife. George Bernard Shaw, facing the same difficulty, resolved it by drawing a composite portrait of two or three London actor-

managers and half a dozen English politicians.

* In "A WOMAN OF GENIUS" (*Double-day-Page*), Mary Austin makes her escape by sliding down the fact that Olivia May Lattimore is really not a genius at all, but merely an actress who thinks she is. Most good actresses, I dare say, think they are; the belief is one of the principal signs of that sublime assurance which lies at the heart of competent acting. But the truth is, of course, that genius is altogether too fine a word to apply to stage players, just as it is too fine a word to apply to opera singers, fiddlers, piano thumpers, college professors and other such retailers of better men's ideas. A first rate actress, true enough, may be measurably better than a mere interpreter, a phonograph in skirts, a sentient marionette; she may actually add a valuable something to the thing created by the dramatist. But that something, after all, is no more than a good painter adds to a house. It is the architect and not the painter that creates the house, and in the same way it is the dramatist and not the actress that creates the character the actress plays. Creation is an act of the highest cerebral centers. It takes out of any man who attempts it the best that is in him. When it is essayed by a true genius it takes out of him the best that is in the human race. But interpretation is usually as much a physical as a psychic matter. An actress with only one eye would be in worse case than an actress with only one cerebral hemisphere; a Mischa Elman with defective hearing and clumsy thumbs would simply cease to exist as a Mischa Elman. And yet Lafcadio Hearn, with only one eye, created works of undoubted genius, and Ludwig Van Beethoven, with defective hearing, and Richard Wagner, with clumsy thumbs, each revolutionized the art of music. The test of a creative genius is that he creates something great and different. The test of an interpreter is that he does not reduce that greatness to the commonplace and that differentness to rote. The one is greatest when he gives us most of himself; the other is greatest when he best effaces himself.

By all of which it appears that Olivia May Lattimore is not a genius, whatever she herself may think of it. But nevertheless, as Mrs. Austin sets her before us, she is an extraordinarily attractive and entertaining woman. Her account of her childhood and introduction to the stage (the story is autobiographical in form) is full of reality; we see clearly the geese who hatch this swan; the shoddy little town of Taylorville becomes as vivid as Mr. Benson's Riseborough. And there is sharp observation and satisfying interpretation, too, in the chapters which deal with Olivia's early struggles as an actress—her first, deceptive success, her weary siege of the managers' offices, her close encounter with actual starvation. But with the beginnings of her celebrity, the birth of her notion that she is a genius, the chronicle begins to lose its grip. The Jew who grubstakes and press-agents her has the creaky joints of a god from the machine; the great engineer who later wins her and discards her is never half so real as the country bumpkin who was the lover and husband of her youth. But allowing for all this, it must be granted that Mrs. Austin has given us a genuinely distinguished piece of work. In the midst of gaseous nothings it is a novel with bone and sinew. It deals frankly with realities. It gets away from the customary rumble-bumble. It is as unlike the conventional best seller as an American novel may be—and get published.

Ethel Sidgwick, an English novelist lately "discovered" with a considerable flourish of *blasphemus*, is a graceful water colorist, a fair match in letters for Cécile Chaminade in music, the mistress of a very pretty technique. But I am unable to report that she brings much that is new or anything that is profound to her inquiry into human motives. Of the three stories that she offers in a group, the most entertaining, I think, is "LE GENTLEMAN" (*Small-Maynard*), and here we have nothing more than the old conflict between love and duty, with duty winning irritatingly and somewhat incredibly. Why does Alexander Fergusson, the hard-headed Scotchman,

submit to the tyrannies and infidelities of the silly Meysie Lampeter? And why does the intelligent Gilberte Morny yield herself so docilely to family orders? It is romantic, of course, but is it sense? I do not deny, mark you, that such things must be; in point of fact they often are. But it is the business of a serious novelist to account for them, to elucidate and enforce them, to make them not only possible but also inevitable. This, I fear, Miss Sidgwick fails to do. She has a fine hand for the lighter shades of character—she makes Alexander interesting, and Meysie and Gilberte, too, and also the musical prodigy of "PROMISE" and the Irish folk of "HERSELF"—but in the greater clashes of will and emotion she falls a bit short. A clever reporter, an ingratiating writer, but one who still lacks a comprehensible philosophy of life.

"MY LADY'S GARTER," by Jacques Futrelle (*Rand-McNally*), is the last novel that we shall ever have from Mr. Futrelle's pen, for he was one of the staunch fellows who helped the women and children into the *Titanic's* boats and then went down with the ship. A capital maker of galloping and unserious romances was lost in that memorable tragedy of the sea. He had a fine hand for devising astounding plots; he knew men and women; he wrote with plausibility and aplomb; and above all, he tempered the hot steel of derring-do in the oil of humor. It was as a humorist, indeed, that he made his first success. No doubt you remember the story—an extravagant and hilarious tale about a Kentuckian who bred a race horse with hind legs like a kangaroo's, and struck the bookmakers dead by running the beast a mile in 1.01. That story was a little masterpiece, perfectly planned and superbly written, and it made Mr. Futrelle a popular author over night. Then he tried the larger form of the light romance and succeeded again, but I doubt that he had got within sight of his best work when he died. "MY LADY'S GARTER," however, shows the way he was going. With its vixenish, red-haired heroine, its poetizing sub-hero, its sentimental villain and its five-

thumbed detectives, it assays a good deal more humor than sugar. There are still plenty of concessions, true enough, to the form and its conventions, but in most of them there are evidences of an effort to break away, and in the course of time, I have no doubt, Mr. Futrelle would have moulded that form into something better fitting his talents. His true field was humor: he had in him the making of a first rate satirist, a species of scrivener very rare among us—and it is a pity that he did not live long enough wholly to find himself. As it is, he left behind him three or four long stories of unusual ingenuity and charm, and a public which must sincerely mourn his passing. To die at thirty-seven in the full blush of health, with the door of opportunity wide open and skill just showing its quality—this, surely, was a fate too cruel for understanding.

And so we come to the end, with oh, so many books remaining. Grab "THE NEW HUMPTY DUMPTY," by Daniel Chaucer (*Lane*), and you will not lament it. A burlesque novel with genuine humor in it: a sort of elaborate parody of the Zenda tale of yesteryear. Or "CAVIARE," by Grant Richards (*Houghton-Mifflin*), another wholly merry concoction. Or "SMOKE BELLEW," by Jack London (*Century Co.*), a tale of dashing doings in the Klondike. Or "THE WHITE BLACKBIRD," by Hudson Douglas (*Little-Brown*), a rip-snorting chronicle of villainy and high adventure. Or "A ROMANCE OF BILLY GOAT HILL," by Alice Hegan Rice (*Century Co.*), a rambling story enlivened by vivid and amusing character sketches. Or "OVER THE PASS," by Frederick Palmer (*Scribner*), an Arizona rendering of the story of Romeo Montague and Julia Capulet, with considerable embellishment. Or "PLEASURES AND PALACES," by Juliet Wilbor Tompkins (*Doubleday-Page*), an idyl of young love with humor in it and a Howard Christy hero seven feet, three inches in height. Or—

But there goes the whistle. Next month, which is January, but magazine-ly about December 15, we'll be among the Christmas books.

SOMETHING PERSONAL

By the Publisher

OUR readers have taken extraordinary interest in our Title Contest. All parts of the country have helped swell the great heap of responses. Even officers in the fleet, which gathered in the Hudson for the Naval Review, contributed titles. One group of people in Salt Lake City pooled their interests and forwarded twenty-nine titles on a single sheet, which of course was not in accordance with the terms of the contest. A class in English composition in a large Western city, which happened to be studying the subject of adequate titles, sent fifty-three in one lot, each title under a different name.

The average contestant followed the line of least resistance, and such easy titles as "The Jewel of Asia," "The Geisha," "Sayonara," "A True Lover's Knot," "Sunset for Cho-Cho-San," "The Girl of the Iris Blossom," "Miss Lachesis of Mulberry Street" and "Miss Sherlock Holmes" came to us in shoals. Many resorted to familiar quotations, with Kipling first in the running. Prime favorites from this source were "The Female of the Species," "A Fool There Was" and "Sisters Under the Skin." The Bible, Shakespeare and the useful Bartlett were of course industriously quarried.

Some waggish friends took our offer facetiously, with weird results. "A Splurge of Ink," "Pickled Prunes," "Sensation in Smart Set," and "Tommy-rot" were among their caustic suggestions. Other vague yet fascinating titles were "What the Devil," "Wonderful Woman and Mere Man," "Holy Smoke," "The Eczema Kid," and "24-½ Inches Gone to Waist." Quite the

cleverest of these joking titles was "Jap-a-lack."

But while the judges were glad of a chance to smile over their work they realized that choosing the winning title for Mr. MacAlarney's clever story was a serious affair. Bearing in mind the type of the story and the relative importance of its several characters, it was their unanimous verdict that the prize of \$100 should be awarded to the title "The Girl from Headquarters." Now it happened that not one but seven contestants submitted this title, and in accordance with the terms of our offer, the prize money was therefore divided into seven parts. Here are the names of the winners, who have long since received their checks:

Miss Clara H. Weigand, Buffalo, N. Y.
W. E. Anderson, Des Moines, Iowa.
O. K. Dowell, Elnora, Ark.
Harry P. Smith, Newark, N. J.
Miss Mary Lockwood, Saratoga Springs, N. Y.
E. E. Packard, Memphis, Tenn.
Paul R. Langdon, Saranac Lake, N. Y.

There now remained the task of choosing the ten next best titles, which should each receive a year's subscription to THE SMART SET. Not so apt in our opinion as "The Girl from Headquarters," these latter still present many felicities of phrase, and in one or two instances attain distinct cleverness. The ten winning titles in this class and their authors are:

"The Double Standard," William Floyd, New York, N. Y.
"Vale, Valet," Mrs. Alice Daniel, North Forest Park, Baltimore, Md.
"Tokio Papers Please Copy," Leo Crane, Kean's Cañon, Ariz.

"L'Envoi to the Ballade," Miss Elsie Berger, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"The Balanced Scale," Mrs. George Alfs, Peoria, Ill.

"Snap Dragon," J. C. Parrott, Roanoke, Va.

"The Girdle of Venus," Elias Hughes, Pater-son, N. J.

"The Singular Endowments of Miss Dawson," Miss Bertha Trapac, Guttenberg, N. J.

"The Sting of the Butterfly," E. C. O'Dea, Coalinga, Cal.

"Cross Currents," Miss Lois Kinkead, Kirkwood, Mo.

The responses to our second Prize Title Contest, which closes November 15, are already heavy. Full details may be found in the November issue.

Our November Cover Page

If we had received as many thousand letters regarding our November cover page as came to us in the Prize Title Contest, we could perhaps have formed a real opinion of what our readers thought of the matter, but we know for a certainty that the majority buy the magazine for its contents and that they have no particular interest in the cover page. After all, why should they? Before I tell you what some of our readers have said about it, I want to thank every one who took enough interest in my inquiry to make response. Everybody has heard the bromidic remark that if all the people had the same mind, it would be a sad world. Certainly the difference of opinion in the matter of our cover has added to our natural gaiety of heart. In the same mail came two letters, which vividly illustrate this engaging human trait. Says one:

How did the new cover strike me? Well—just as though I had received a black-bordered envelope from home. I haven't yet had the heart to look my copy over. *THE SMART SET* in its familiar cover, on the newsstands of a strange city, always makes me forget I am lonely. Vary it, yes—but don't change it. Don't let it lose its identity and be just a periodical.

And here, by way of contrast, is the other letter, which, as mentioned, dropped from the same mail bag:

You have won me! For years I have been a subscriber to *THE SMART SET*, and from that

time have loved it. But when you assumed charge of things, I did not like it a bit. You spoke sneeringly of the cover and I was personally offended. I wanted no change, no "bettering." When I opened my magazine tonight, my head swam. I felt as if the last dress of my girlhood had gone from me; that only the robes of maturity were mine; that I never again in this life could wear dotted swiss and blue ribbons. Then I read the magazine and studied the cover design for I decided that this was the best issue of *THE SMART SET* and I had no regret for the old cover design. The lovers have vanished in robes of gold; but let them go. Something better has taken their place.

And so it went. Some would assert that the old cover was distinctive but grew tiresome; others that the new cover was exquisite, a joy, the real reason why they purchased the November number. Still others wrote in sadness. One plaintive letter read as follows:

Your new cover—distinctive, exceptional and artistic—led to my going two abysmal days without the magazine, while it lay unread and unrecognized on my favorite newsstand! Finally, with a blank Sunday staring me in the face, I became desperate, and going to the dealer, cried: "Isn't *THE SMART SET* in yet?" Then I got it.

It was not my intention to use the November design for more than one issue of the magazine, so this month we return to our cadet blue, with a slightly different design on the front cover but with the old idea retained. Perhaps this is the best of any. In any event, I again thank you for writing me.

Justly Proud

We are justly proud of our advertising in this issue. Readers of *THE SMART SET* are cultivated, refined people—people in good circumstances, with large purchasing power and large requirements in the matter of comforts and luxuries. We want only the announcements of high-grade houses; we want *quality* rather than quantity. We are constantly declining advertisements which are not up to our high standard.

John Adams Thayer



"Harvest"—by Vincent Aderente.

Prosperity

There has been a bumper crop.

This is because the tillers of the soil have been industrious, and the rain and the sun have favored their plantings.

There has been industrial activity.

The makers of things in factories have been busy. They have had work to do and pay for doing it.

There has been commercial success.

The people who buy and sell and fetch and carry have been doing a lot of business and they have been paid for doing it.

The country is prosperous because all the people have been busy.

Good crops and good times can be enjoyed only when the Government maintains peace and harmony.

This task of the Government is made comparatively easy because the American

people have been enabled to become so well acquainted with each other. They know and understand one another. They are like one family.

The producer and consumer, no matter where they live, are close together.

This is largely due to our wonderful facilities for intercommunication. We excel in our railways, our mails and our telegraphs, and, most of all, in our telephones.

The Bell System has fourteen million miles of wire spread over all parts of the country. Each day there are twenty-five million telephone talks all the way from twenty feet to two thousand miles long.

The raiser of crops, the maker of things, and the man of commerce, all are helped to co-operate and work together for peace and prosperity by means of the Universal telephone.

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

One Policy

One System

Universal Service

In answering advertisements, please mention THE SMART SET

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Original from
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



THIS PERFUME is esthetically gratifying. To place yourself within an atmosphere of refined odor, every wave of which is idealized as with the fragrance of the flowers, you must use

Cœur de Jeannette

(HEART OF JEANNETTE)

The premier creation of the Perfumer who ranks highest in France and in the world, HOUBIGANT—Paris.

2-oz. bottle at all dealers, \$3.15. If you prefer to try an adequate sample, send 20c to us, naming this magazine.

For holiday presents select the premier creations of Houbigant—exclusive in character and rich in appearance. There are His Extracts of favorite flowers, Toilet Waters, Toilet Soaps, Powders for the skin, Sachet Powders, Vanity Boxes, Bath Salts, Shaving Soaps and Creams.

The subtle caress of Cœur de Jeannette makes this a dainty gift, but for a glowing odor of magnificent bouquet choose Houbigant's famous Ideal, 2½ oz. bottle, \$4.25. A perfume for a man is Peau d'Espagne, 2½ oz. bottle, \$2.60. A masterpiece of flower realism, Violette Houbigant, 2½ oz. bottle, \$6.25. (These are usual prices at leading dealers.)

His wonderful flower of the moonlight, Jasmin; his La Rose France of the old French Salons; his exotic Lilies of the Valley (Muguet) and his exquisite Carnation of the King (Oeillet du Roi) are "prizes" to delighted recipients.

Houbigant color Booklet describing his premier creations gladly sent to anyone.

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**All the
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**Send for Free
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The Smart Set Birthday Book

Choicely bound in imported leather, stamped in red and black, printed on hand-made paper.

An Ideal Birthday Gift

284 Pages

Postpaid, 75 Cents

John Adams Thayer Corporation

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By his original method of RECONSTRUCTION, METHOT transforms your OLD, faded and worn feathers into beautiful Plumes, giving them all the innate freshness of NEW.

Why buy NEW feathers when such economy is possible?

Send your OLD feathers to METHOT and get expert advice as to their reconstruction. If advice is not acceptable they will be returned by mail at our expense.

H. METHOT

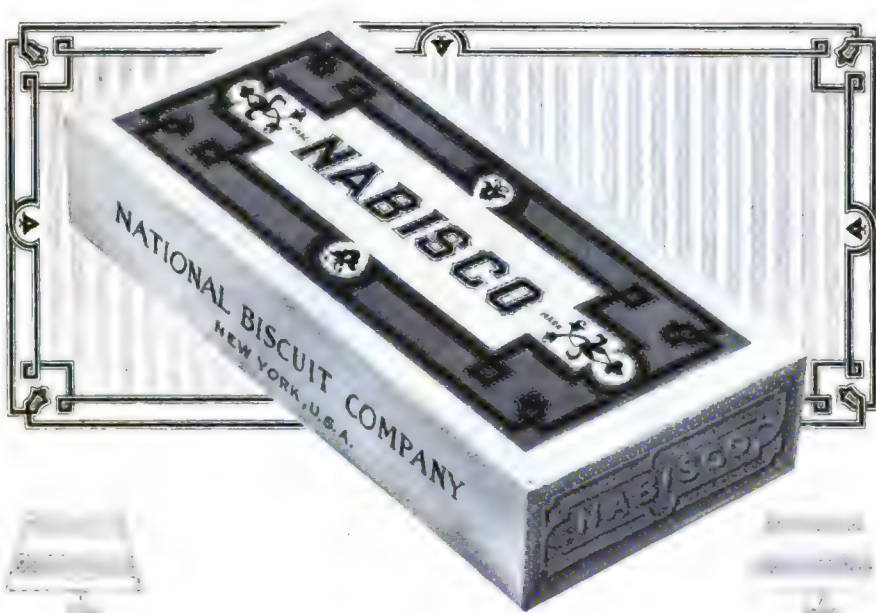
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Second Floor

Take Elevator

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Serve with creams or ices, with fruits or beverages.

In ten cent tins; also in twenty-five cent tins.

CHOCOLATE TOKENS—Another dessert confection of pre-eminent goodness—chocolate covered.

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Rain-Resist-
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Outwears two
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Makes an
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A Gift Bearing the Hall Mark of
Luxury Yet of Practical Value
Is a Boon Alike to Donor
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A dainty negligee from some
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Matinees, Boudoir Robes,
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Select your tribute now and
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Many other Holiday Specials at correspond-
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Largest maker and retailer of dress
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Apparel Exclusive and Refined

Smartness and individuality
in dress is what every woman
seeks.

Every Field garment
possesses these charac-
teristics—they are out
of the ordinary and
yet attractively priced.

**THIS CHARMING
DANCING FROCK**
(as illustrated).

Foundation of white
charmeuse, tunic of
chiffon, edged with a
bugle trimming and
fringe. Made in white
over white; pink over
white; light blue over
white; coral over white;
green over white.



Price \$42.50

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"Love me"
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Established 1831

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A perfume of wonderful fascination, distinguishing
fragrance and extreme permanency.

EXTRACT

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BATH CRYSTALS

FACE POWDER

TALCUM

SHAMPOO, ETC.

If your dealer does not stock, we will supply name
of nearest agent

Look for the name **PRICHARD & CONSTANCE**
on every package

Send five 2c stamps for sample

ARTHUR J. MORISON CO.

49-51 WEST 23D STREET, N. Y.

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DE LL. M.M. LE ROI & LA REINE D'ANGLETERRE
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DE S. M. LE ROI DE SIAM**

CARTIER

**NEW YORK
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LONDRES**

**712 FIFTH AVENUE
11-13 RUE DE LA PAIX
175-176 NEW BOND STREET**



Reduce or Increase Your Weight—Improve Your Health—Perfect Your Figure

Become my pupil and I will make you my friend. Devote but fifteen minutes daily to my system and you can weigh what Nature intended. You can reduce any part of your figure burdened with superfluous flesh or build up any part that is undeveloped. The effect of my system can be concentrated on your hips, waist, limbs or any other part of your body.

My system tends to make the figure perfectly proportioned throughout—a full, rounded neck; shapely shoulders, arms and legs; a fine, fresh complexion; good carriage, with erect poise and grace of movement.

You Can Improve Your Health

My system stimulates, reorganizes and regenerates your entire body. It helps you to transform your food into good, rich blood. It strengthens your heart, lungs and other organs, conquering all weaknesses and disorders and generating vital force.

My latest book, "The Body Beautiful," should be read by every woman, and I will send it to you free. It explodes the fallacy that lack of beauty or health cannot be avoided. In it I explain how every woman can be vigorous, healthy and attractive.

I have practised what I teach. In childhood I was puny and deformed. I have overcome all weaknesses by my own natural, drugless methods. Millions of people have seen in me a living demonstration of my unique system of health-culture and body-building. If you are weak, nervous, fat, thin, unshapely, tired, lacking vitality or in any other respect not at your very best, I can surely be of service to you.

MY GUARANTEE

With my free book, "The Body Beautiful," which is fully illustrated with photographs of myself explaining my system, I give full particulars of my Guarantee Trial Plan, whereby you can test the value of my instruction without risking a single penny.

Send 2c. stamp for "The Body Beautiful" and Trial Plan today

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Do you drink
Gibson's
or just whiskey?

The Gibson Distilling Company, Philadelphia, Pa.

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AT the Studios you will find Lamps for every purpose, from the small Desk Lamp to the massive Standard, each of which is an example of artistic designing and thorough workmanship. Attention is directed also to the new line of Candlesticks and the many beautiful novelties in Tiffany Favrile Glass which are particularly appropriate as gifts. Illustrations and prices sent upon request.

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CHICAGO OFFICE, ORCHESTRA BVILDING - BOSTON OFFICE, LAWRENCE BVILDING.

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<p>THE U.S. PLAYING CARD CO., CINCINNATI, U.S.A.</p>		



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J. SIMON
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INTRODUCED IN 1860

UNIQUE for the CARE and BEAUTY of the SKIN
MAKES DISAPPEAR IN ONE NIGHT

CHAPS CRACKS REDNESS


THE CRÈME SIMON

Contains no fat, does not become rancid and does not make hair grow

Simon Rice Powder and Soap

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BOTTLED AT THE SPRINGS, BUDA PEST, HUNGARY.

Write us to tell you of the best

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN
TO COVER ALL RISKS

Tourists' automobiles boxed and forwarded to
any point and returned to the United States,
including all formalities here and abroad.

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Customs, Insurance Brokers and General Forwarders

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The "Different" Cigarette

Milo

I am willing to retire before
my betters—but as yet I have
not found them.

—MILO

Price in the U. S., 25 cents

THE SURBRUG COMPANY, New York

There's just the difference between a raw, poorly made Cocktail and a

Club Cocktail

that there is between a raw, new Whiskey and a soft old one.

The best of ingredients—the most accurate blending cannot give the softness and mellowness that age imparts.

Club Cocktails are aged in wood before bottling—and no freshly made Cocktail can be as good.

Manhattan, Martini and other standard blends, bottled, ready to serve through cracked ice.

Refuse Substitutes

AT ALL DEALERS

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HEADACHE?
BROMO-SELTZER



Send Him Monogrammed Cigarettes

Here's a Christmas gift with an individual touch.

He won't have another gift like it—will know you thought of him before the eleventh hour—that you had

them made expressly for him. And they'll go in a special Christmas Box—or a Mahogany Humidor, 100 of the finest full-bodied, fragrant, hand-made Turkish cigarettes, with monogram (select style below by number), choice of plain tip, gold, silver, straw or cork, and packed in a beautiful imported aluminum-paper lined, padded gift box . . . \$3



1.



2.



3.



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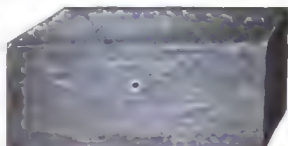
Or you can have the 100 cigarettes in a solid Mahogany Humidor for \$5. At any store in the country this Mahogany Humidor alone would cost \$5. This special Christmas offer includes the 100 monogrammed cigarettes and sent postpaid. And the Humidor is good for many a hundred cigarettes afterward.

Place your order today to insure delivery before Christmas, for we must make the monogram die.

GILL and GILL

Made - to - Order
High Class Cigarette

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HOISTING LIFT VAN ON BOARD STEAMER

NEW FIRE-PROOF STORAGE
Clean, Separate, Locked Rooms
Most Modern and Convenient

WEST SIDE WAREHOUSE
248, 250 and 252 WEST 65th STREET
Local, Domestic and Foreign
Removals in Wheel or Lift Vans

BOWLING GREEN STORAGE & VAN COMPANY
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BERTHE MAY'S MATERNITY CORSET



THE ideal corset of this kind; made for its own purpose—can be worn at any time, allows one to dress as usual and preserve a normal appearance.

Prices from \$5
to \$18

Mail orders filled with complete satisfaction. Call at my parlors or write for Booklet No. 17, which is sent free under plain envelope.

BERTHE MAY

10 East 46th Street

NEW YORK

Parfum LA VALSE

Just as the exquisite dancing of Karsavina and Nijinsky in "The Spectre of the Rose" to Weber's "Invitation a la Valse" enchanted the civilized world, so has the fascinating new Morny Parfum "La Valse" captivated the world of fashion. "La Valse" should achieve even wider fame than its well-known predecessor, Parfum "Chaminade," so exquisite and satisfying is its fragrance, and so indefinitely beautiful is it in its complex modernity, its elusive intensity and its delicate and subtle suggestiveness.

PARFUM "LA VALSE"	\$3.00, 6.00
"La Valse" Bath Salts	\$1.25, 3.30, 7.50
"La Valse" Complexion Powder	\$1.30
"La Valse" Toilet Soap (3 tablets)	\$2.50
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
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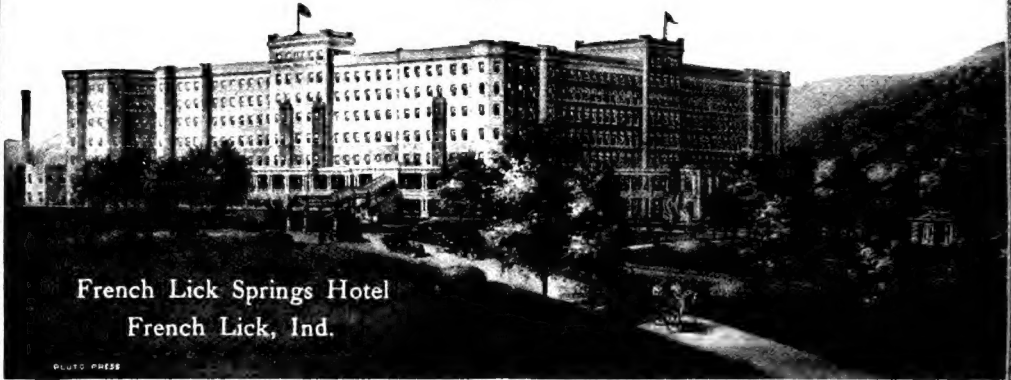


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